



The History of the Casson Family and Casson Homes in Western Australia 1897-2017



Cate Pattison

The History of the Casson Family and Casson Homes in Western Australia 1897-2017

**"A nation's greatness is measured by how it treats
its weakest members."**

~ Mahatma Ghandi

This work was privately commissioned and by John Casson in 2016 and produced by
Cate Pattison (2017)
catepattisonresearch@gmail.com

Although the author and has made every effort to ensure that the information contained is correct, the author disclaims any liability to any party for any loss, damage, or disruption caused by errors or omissions, whether such errors or omissions result from negligence, accident, or any other cause.

Table of Contents

PREFACE & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	5
FOREWORD	6
Introduction & Synopsis	7
19th Century Beginnings	8
Susan's story	8
Ted's Story	10
An Ordinary Family	12
Marriage and children (1897)	12
A promising career (1902)	12
Tragedy (1909)	16
The Casson Kids (1910 on)	18
Mrs Susan Casson – Call to Service	23
Women in Labor (Labor Women's Organisation, LWO).....	23
The Gospel of Unionism - Susan finds her voice (1911).....	23
The Australian Labor Federation recognises women (1911)	24
Feminism Dawns – Women's Service Guild (1913)	25
Women to the Bench – Children's Court (1915).....	26
Woman Organiser (1916)	27
Queen of the Battlers (1916)	28
Mobilising Mental Health	29
Official Visiting (1915)	29
Mental Health After Care	31
Connecting the Asylum with the Community & Christmas Cheer (1919).....	31
The Mental Hospital After Care & Comforts Fund Association (MHACCF) is Born (1922) ..	31
From Ugly Men to Lotteries	34
A home of their own	36
A band of fine women – Who were the MHACCFAI?	37
Getting on with the job (1935-38).....	39
Investment and Expansion (1939).....	40
More sorrow for the Casson family (1946).....	42
Reward and Recognition	44
A Gong for Susan (1948).....	44
Building for the Future – another major extension (1949).....	45
Decanting (1950s)	45
End of an Era	46
Jean Casson's House Built in a Day (1951)	47
Susan Passes (1952).....	48
Changing of the Gard	49
Business as Usual at Casson House (1950s)	49
Generous Benefactors	50
Matron Ross.....	51
Yet another Extension (1957)	51
Changes in management and staff (1960-1965).....	52
Mental Health Gets Attention.....	53
Branching Out – A hostel for men in Guildford. Matilda Gard House (1962)	54

The Third Casson: John Takes Over	56
Matilda Gard Passes (1970)	56
Dick's Day	56
Doctors in the House.....	57
More Work for John – The Richmond Fellowship.....	58
Woodville House (1977).....	58
St Rita's – a Home for Life (1979)	59
Expansion (1980s)	59
Fresh horses and a new name – Casson Homes Inc. (1980s).....	60
Consolidation and the Growth of Group Homes (1990s).....	61
An Honest Day's Work – ATUL & PD Leading Enterprises (1980s).....	62
An Organisation for the Millennium (2000)	63
New St Rita's.....	63
Nick – The Fourth Casson	63
Centenary Approaches	64
Index	66
Endnotes	69

PREFACE & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

When John Casson approached me to write the history of Casson Homes, I knew that I would have no choice but to accept his offer. Having written a book to commemorate forty years of the Richmond Fellowship in Perth, I had learnt about Susan Adelaide Casson and had become intrigued by this woman who seemed to do so much with so little, driven by a need to help the most vulnerable people in Perth in the 1920s.

Casson Homes is in my view a unique organisation that has endured thanks to the work and commitment of four generations of Cassons – who all appear to have the genetically shared drivers of compassion, altruism and an ability to do a thousand things at once. It is impossible to tell the story of Casson Homes without telling the story of a family – the Casson family - and also the family that is Casson Homes; who cares for its residents with kindness and respect, often over the majority of those individuals' lifetimes.

This history may seem at first lengthy, however it is merely skims the surface of the century of Casson Homes. Writing this story has also produced a rear vision of Perth over the last century that was often strongly shaped by charitable and community service work that 'filled the gaps' left by limited early government provision for the socially and mentally disadvantaged. Threading together the links and connections between people and generations in Perth as it grew from a colonial settlement to thriving city has also been fascinating and probably absorbed far more of my time than it should. More detail on the political, industrial and regulatory forces that shaped the world of mental health services would be a valued further addition to this work, as well as time spent collating in-house records such as information around residents and finance.

It is anticipated that the production of this history will provide a valuable contribution to a full history of Casson Homes to be published in the year of its centenary, 2022.

Thanks must be made to those that gave their time to talk to me about their memories of their association with Casson Homes. Bert Yates, Martin McAteer, Liz Chase, Joan Geddes, Beryl King, Colin Ross, Jason Simpson, Nick Casson, and of course John Casson, have made valuable contributions to this history. Thank you to Jenny Casson for her prior genealogical research. The research work of Dr Phillipa Martyr into the history of mental health in Western Australia and Claremont Mental Hospital has also contributed valuable insight.

Cate Pattison, July 2017

FOREWORD

It gives me much pleasure to write a short foreword to 'The History of Casson Homes', as I believe the history of an organisation is part of its soul: lose the history and the soul is lost. I would firstly like to thank Cate Pattison for the hard work and professional way she has put together our story.

I am sure my grandmother Susan, along with all the other founding committee members and supporters would be as proud, as I am, with the way their dream has progressed over the last 95 years. I'm certain too that Susan would be very happy to see that future members of her family have continued to keep Casson Homes going.

The success of Casson Homes would also not have been possible without the work of past and present dedicated staff, board members and supporters - far too many to mention individually.

John Casson, July 2017



(¹)

Introduction & Synopsis

At the time Susan Adelaide Casson and a group of supporters started the Mental Hospitals After Care and Comforts Fund Association Inc. (MHACCFAI) in 1922, they did so not out of a desire to create a best practice facility for long-term sufferers of mental illness, but simply to try and meet an urgent need in the Perth community that they could not ignore. Having inside knowledge of the world of 'lunacy' as it was known then, from her role as an Official Visitor on the Board of Visitors for mental institutions, Susan despaired that there was no support or options for people who were being discharged from care or those unable to leave the increasingly overcrowded asylum. There was simply nowhere to go. Described in 1934 as 'indefatigable', Susan worked at the coalface of community-driven social welfare in Perth, through two World Wars and the Depression.

Susan had started life torn from her family home in Ireland and grew up in a Melbourne orphanage, with limited formal education and certainly no social privilege. Widowed as a young woman with four small children, her disadvantages in life had been many, however she went on to become one of Western Australia's leading female social reformers in the first half of the twentieth century with strong personal connections to many of the State's leading political and medical men and women of the day.

Susan's work has been continued by her daughter Matilda Gard, grandson John Casson and now great-grandson Nick Casson, who have all quietly devoted their lives to the objective of providing a welcoming home and daily dignity for people struggling to live with long-term mental illnesses such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, depression, anxiety and other conditions. Many people who have passed through this organisation have spent the majority of their lives at Casson House, and been nursed through their final years at St Rita's Nursing Home. Over nearly 100 years, the Cassons have developed their own style of residential mental health care, resisting the dominant drivers of commercialism and excessive governance, in order to provide the sort of service that experience has taught them is in the best interests of their residents. To this day these principles remain the fundamental drivers of their service. This is their story.

19th Century Beginnings

To fully appreciate the forces that shaped Susan Casson it is worthwhile considering the world into which she was born. Her husband Ted was also undoubtedly instrumental in shaping her political drive and convictions, so his background is also of interest. Her tough start in life may also have contributed to the impact on early 20th century social welfare in Perth she was to later make.

Susan's story

Susan Adelaide Holmes was born in Geashill, Kings County, Ireland on 28th of December, 1871. **Susan was frequently referred to as Adelaide, and often known as Addie, but in this history for simplicity she will remain Susan.** The fourth of nine children born, Susan's birth just after Christmas would have been another of many challenges her mother Maria Susan Ardagh would have faced in her rural Victorian life.

Susan's parents Maria and William were born in 1839 when only about a quarter of the Irish population was literate and life expectancy was around 40 years of age. In the time of William and Maria's childhoods, from 1845 to 1851, Ireland endured its great famine, which killed over a million people and caused another million to flee. In 1839 a baptism for Susan Casson's father, William Nassau Holmes, son of William and Margaret Holmes, was recorded in the Rosenallis Register (Coolbanagher, County Laois) on August the 26th. Susan's mother, Maria Ardagh, was the daughter of farmer Arthur Ardagh and when she was born in 1839 in County Tipperary, Ireland, times would have been tough for folk such as the Ardaghs, to say the least. Maria met William Nassau Holmes, the child of a farmer-turned Policeman, and married him on 29th August 1867 at the St Mary's (Church of Ireland) Church, in the small village Geashill, County Offally (then known as Kings County). At the time Maria resided at the rural property 'Derrywhelan' where she was to return later, and William at 'Ballycollin'.

Geashill was an estate village that had suffered badly earlier when the Lord of the Manor, Baron Digby inherited the estate in 1856 and promptly ran out of money, whereupon he evicted many long-standing estate workers from their homes. As a solution to their dispossession, a local vicar had arranged for 400 of the good people of Geashill to emigrate to Queensland sailing a treacherous journey directly from Cork in 1862, some of many Irish who fled to Australia around this time, five years before William and Maria's day.² Not only would this exodus have had an enormous impact on this small community, but it would also suggest that strong connections between the village and Australia had already been established, by the time Maria and William were married and started their family there. As a gamekeeper, William would probably have been employed by the Estate.

William and Maria swiftly produced eight children in the space of nine years between 1868 and 1877, who were all recorded baptised in the Geashill COI register. Susan Adelaide Holmes' baptism was on the 31st January 1872. But by 1879 when Maria was pregnant with Beatrice, who was to be her last child, William left his wife and Geashill with the seven (surviving) children, including Henry who was only a baby at the time, and boarded the SS *Clifton* to set sail for Melbourne, Australia. One can only imagine the earth shattering impact this decision would have had on Maria, not to mention each of the young children. Why William chose to do this can only be speculated, however he was accompanied on the ship by

one Mary 'Holmes', aged 35, who wasn't his sister. The group disembarked at Melbourne after a long journey on 28th September 1880.³

Whether it was always William's plan, who can say, but in less than a year the four youngest children (Susan, Thomas, Alice and Henry) are admitted to the Melbourne Orphan Asylum in Dendy Street, Brighton, which had recently been established in ample grounds, incorporating a small farm. The older children were 'put out to service' and Susan would have had to assume the maternal role for her younger siblings at the orphanage, aged just 9. Susan was to spend nine years at the Brighton Orphanage, leaving at the age of 18 (however her sister Alice left around the same time aged just 15). Orphanage records incorrectly note that the children's mother, Maria had died in Ireland the year before the admission, on the 22nd of September 1879 (which William would have informed them in order to enable his desertion). It's likely the children were also told this story that would have been provided by William to the authorities, however correspondence in later years between Maria and her children show they were to at some point find out that she was indeed alive and well. Family information confirms that the eldest daughter Frances Louise contacted the local parish priest in Geashill to find out what had become of her mother. Letters from Maria written in later years to Frances in the family archives suggest that they had been corresponding for some time once her grandchildren had begun to enter the world, and that Willie, her first son had been back to Ireland to visit her as he had moved to Canada around the turn of the century. In a letter Maria wrote to daughter Alice in 1904, she asks "does your Father know (son) Willie has been here?"

Susan's father William left Victoria for NSW in 1886 aged 47, so by the time the children were released from the orphanage, William was long gone. There are also records of a child Osbert born in 1890 to William Nassau Holmes and Lillie Edith Thorne in Hamilton Tasmania. William then apparently spend his later years descending on each of his grown children for periods of time, and was to die aged 81 in Perth where he moved in his seventies, no doubt to let Susan and her sister Frances nurse him in his final days. It's not known what happened to his companion, Mary.

Meanwhile, back in Geashill, Maria had given birth to her ninth child alone, Beatrice Anna on 26th January 1880 who was to grow up as an only child. William's mother died that year too, probably with the shock of her son and grandchildren's swift departure. Maria and Beatrice went on to live with Maria's unmarried brother Fred Ardagh in Derrywheelan, Geashill, who was supporting his deserted sister and niece as a farmer, by the time of the Irish census of 1901. Beatrice corresponded with her sisters in Australia, Alice and Fanny (Francis), and tells them of their eldest Brother Willie in Canada, who seems to stay in closer contact with her than his Australian family. Beatrice eventually left her mother and travelled 'North to preach the gospel' according to family recollections. She met and married John Skelly and had three children, all returning to Geashill. A few days after the birth of her third child in 1916, a girl Beatrice, she haemorrhaged and died, aged just 36. John Skelly apparently joined forces with his deceased wife's uncle, Fred Ardagh to run the farm. It is thought the descendants of John and Beatrice's children still live at the farm, in Derrywheelan.

Susan's mother Maria had died in Geashill of breast cancer a few years before Beatrice's tragic death in 1913. She never saw any of her other children again, or met her many Australian grandchildren. Fred and John would have been left to run the farm and bring up the three young children alone.

There is no found record of Susan from the time that she left the orphanage in Melbourne, until her marriage to Ted in Perth in 1897. It can be assumed that they somehow met in Melbourne and whilst courting possibly followed Ted's sister Sarah (Louie) and her husband John Veitch to prosperous Western Australia.

Ted's Story

Ted (Edgar, and also sometimes referred to as Edward) Casson grew up in a rather different world to Susan, however his own story was also one with its own share of upheaval and sadness.

Ted's father, John Casson was born in Bloughton, Lancashire in 1839 and his mother Matilda Jeffries in Bristol in 1841. By the age of 14 in 1851 John was lodging in Liverpool and working as a clerk, then progressing to the role of bookkeeper for the Liverpool Stock Exchange. In 1857 a major global financial crisis took hold which began in America and then hit England, starting with the fall of the Borough Bank of Liverpool, which may have seen a loss of work in his field. In April 1860 John (who was by now a 'labourer') travelled by his own means to Melbourne on the *British Trident*. John had been a Freemason in England and after his arrival in Australia he was admitted as a Master of the Lodge in Collingwood (No.380) in September 1860. He also affiliated in 1862 to another Lodge in Australia, No.429 in Hotham. In 1863 he married Bristol born Matilda Jeffries in Richmond, Melbourne, and they gave birth to their first child Sarah in 1864, living in Hoddle Street Richmond at the time.

For whatever reason, the Cassons decided to return to England in 1867. According to the 1871 census they were living in Toxteth Park in West Derby Lancashire, as lodgers. John was admitted to the Grand Lodge in Everton No.823 in 1872, transferring from his Melbourne Lodge. His occupation at this time was 'agent', and was again possibly involved with the Stock Exchange (as he was later referred to in Matilda's second marriage announcement). In 1873 their son Edgar Harold Jeffries Casson (Ted) was born. Taking his mother's maiden name (Jeffries) as a middle name was a popular British tradition. John died in 1878 when Ted was just five years old, so memories of his father would have been sketchy. Ted also went on to become a Freemason, and was accepted in Western Australia in 1903 (in the Ophir Lodge, number 43, which had been recently consecrated in 1900 in Howick Street, Perth), keeping up the family tradition.

When her husband died, Ted's Mother Matilda, now 38, decided to move back to Melbourne, with her two young children Sarah 11 and Edgar 5, arriving back in Melbourne in 1879 on the *SS Aconcagua*. She spent seven years in her new home of Liverpool and possibly didn't settle there so well. She's noted in 1882 as living in Lygon Street Carlton as a confectioner. After what must have been nearly ten long years bringing up her children alone, in December 1888 she remarried, a much older man William Richardson of South Yarra in St Stephen's Church, also in Richmond, and they resided at 46 Albion Street South Yarra. Their wedding notice states that Richardson was 'late of Liverpool' so she had probably met him there after John died. Richardson is recorded as coming from Liverpool with his wife Mary in 1880, two years after John had died and the year after Matilda. His wife Mary died in May 1888, and William and Matilda were swiftly wed in the December. Teetotaler William was Treasurer of the Melbourne Total Abstinence Society and died a few years later 1891 aged 69, and was buried in the St Kilda cemetery. An advertisement then appeared in the newspaper

seeking a will for William, so possibly there was some family fallout over his estate that ensued. Matilda may well have inherited William's home in South Yarra, providing her with property and social standing in the upmarket suburb. William Richardson's own daughter, Mary Ellen also married Andrew Scott, in this same year.

Sister Louie was also not having much luck on the husband front. Her first husband, Captain George Dunn⁴ from Beverley Yorkshire may have been a contact from England. She married Dunn in January 1892 at Christ Church South Yarra however he then died suddenly at sea the following month in February of 1892⁵. Louie married again in 1896 to John Tennant Veitch, who came from a respectable family, at the Presbyterian manse of Punt Road South Yarra. The couple moved to Kalgoorlie where John Veitch had already acquired mining leases and spent some £800 sinking wells and doing other work, however he quickly sought exemption from his leases in 1898 (so he either made his fortune or lost a lot of money) when they decide to leave Kalgoorlie for the city. There is record of mother Matilda moving to Perth in 1896, probably with Louie and John.⁶

John Veitch appeared to have already had some building interests in Perth around this time, advertising a property to rent at May Street in 1899 and living at 11 Hooper Street West Perth when their first child Ella is born, followed by John ('Jack' 1899) and Helen (1903). John and Louie lived at 'Tambah', 6 Regent Street in Mount Lawley and he wrote many letters to the Editors of the *West Australian* about council rates, suggesting his interest in politics and social justice. Louie and John would later bear the heartbreak of son Jack's early death as a middle-aged man, which occurred just before Christmas 1938 at his home in Webster Street Nedlands.⁷, following the loss eight years earlier of his own stillborn child, a daughter, in 1930. The Veitch family possibly enjoyed a slightly higher social standing in Perth than the Cassons, as son Jack (who had also been in service) had been educated at Hale School, was a rower, and a successful accountant and then manager for the Hume Pipe Company.⁸ Living nearby and having children of similar ages, Susan and sister-in-law Louie Veitch would definitely have been a feature in other's lives. Having also lost a son in his prime, Louie would have been able to strongly empathise with Susan when she underwent the same tragic loss later in life. John Veitch died in 1950 and then Louie in 1952 (the same year as Susan).

Ted's mother Matilda did not remarry, and lived at various residences in her widow years, including homes in James Street Perth, Hooper Street West Perth/Subiaco and then Maylands. She found some infamous notoriety when she was prosecuted by the City Council as one of a group of women picked up on Barrack Streets accused of wearing 'deadly hatpins' without guards in 1913. Matilda died aged 85 in June 1926 at Louie and John's home in Regent Street in Mount Lawley. She had spent many years as a widow and endured the heartbreak of burying two husbands and later her only son, but unlike Susan's mother in Ireland had enjoyed seeing many of her grandchildren being born and growing up.

An Ordinary Family

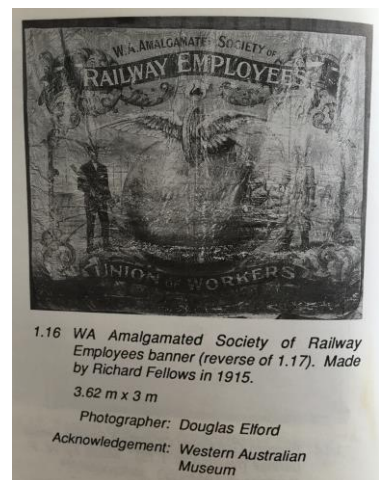
Marriage and children (1897)

Susan Adelaide Holmes and Edgar Casson were married on the 14th January, 1897, at the Wesley Church, 113 Charles Street Perth . He was 23, and at one year his senior, she 24. This was a Wesleyan Methodist Church, and a new limestone building had just been built the year before to replace the old weatherboard chapel (both still stand today). No clues exist as to how Susan and Ted met. They clearly came from different social worlds in Melbourne, however their common beliefs in social justice may possibly have led their paths to cross, leading to their eventual move to WA and marriage.

Susan and Ted's first child, a boy John ('Jack') is born in the year that they are married, and dies aged 12 days. Susan then gave birth to a healthy second son, John Edgar (Jack) Casson in 1898, before her third baby Frederick Gates born in 1900 also died aged seven months. In 1902 a baby girl was born, Matilda Adelaide, followed by William (Bill) Harold in 1903 and then Fred in 1904. According to government records, the two Johns, Frederick and Matilda were all born in Fremantle, William and Fred in West Perth. Her seventh pregnancy in 1907 ends with the birth of a stillborn baby. Average infant mortality rates were around 7% at 1910⁹, which although seems high now, was low considering how unfortunate Ted and Susan had been, burying three babies.

A promising career (1902)

More research is required to find records of Ted's education or early working life, but by 1902 he was busy developing his future career in the Labor movement¹⁰. Ted had been involved in the famous (coal) lumpers strike of 1899 in Fremantle during which railway officials had sought to force railway men to take their place on the wharf, and was a precursor to the formation of a union for these workers.¹¹ Western Australia had joined the Federation in 1900, which had been a victory from a long battle by those largely on the left. The turn of the century was a time of enormous industrial transformation in Western Australia, and the establishment of the rules of Labor relations that are commonplace today were being germinated and fought for on the centre stage of politics and industry.



Press articles reveal that Ted had practical experience working in the railways having 'sacrificed his job' with West Australian Government Railways to become treasurer/secretary in the WAGR Association (union). "In the meantime Mr. Casson, who has for the past four months fulfilled the arduous duties of secretary at a remuneration of £4 per week, has been appointed for a further period of two months at the higher salary of £6 per week"¹². After acting in the post when the Secretary W. Guilfoyle took off for South Africa, Ted was officially appointed in late 1902 as general secretary¹³ of the body which then became known as the West Australian Amalgamated Society of Railway Employees Union of Workers (1899-1958), a union formed to unite all railway men not included in the existing Locomotive Engine Drivers' Firemen's and Cleaners' Union (image¹⁴). The union had their offices at 11 Arcade Chambers, Perth, and had branches all over the State. Just a few years later in 1911 Trades Hall was built on Beaufort Street, when many unions came together under one roof, although Ted was to

never see this day. Ted won the vote for the job by a huge majority. He had also joined the Freemasons in Perth by this time, carrying on the family tradition passed down by his father.

Ted quickly developed quite a name for himself as a promising young Labor man with clear political aspirations in sight. He campaigned hard on the introduction of trades classification and the 'eight hours question' in an attempt to limit a working day to a reasonable length. In 1903 the working man and woman's local paper, *Westralian Worker* published a profile of Ted as follows:

There was a noise in the Worker office the other day. A big, loud noise made by a small man—one Ted Casson, to wit. Ted simply can't be quiet. He makes the editor's auburn locks stand "like goosequills on the fretful porcupine." Casson and Roche are off the chain, organising new branches. Roche is a solid man, weighing a lot, and Casson is about half the size and twice as noisy. He gets the name of being hot-headed. Matters requiring a very delicate touch, where big interests are involved, making Labor men careful and cautious, have had the organisations bothered at times, but Ted has bounced in, and quite irreverently solved the difficulty by cutting the Gordian knot. He is a popular and capable secretary, with an old head on young shoulders. Good secretaries are rare, but Ted has proved himself already to be methodical and able to do all that is necessary in conducting the affairs of a big Labor society. His popularity with the railways will most likely secure him a nomination in the Labor ballot for a Federal Seat.¹⁵

E.H. Casson, 'a dapper little fair-haired chap' featured over 500 times in news reports over this period for his tireless activity representing the rights of railway workers in WA. He attended the Railway Employees Conference in 1904, and is seated in the centre of the photo included.¹⁶

RAILWAY EMPLOYEES' CONFERENCE.

(See Group.)

In this issue is a group of the delegates to the seventh annual conference of the Western Australian Amalgamated Society of Railway Employees, held recently. Following are the names:—
 back row:—Messrs. H. Hewson (Chidlow's Well), A. O. Johnston (Collie), A. Hugo (Kalgoorlie), G. Sprunt (Sutherland Cross), C. Lewis (Perth), J. D. Jowell (York), H. Cooper (Bunbury), J. Wigley (Pinjarra). Middle row:—Messrs. F. J. Read (Midland Junction), A. E. Gibbons (Coolgardie), J. J. O'Farrell (Fremantle), E. Casson (General Secretary), H. G. Swan (President), W. Roche (General Treasurer), F. Gates (Editor "Railway News"), J. Loughlin (Menzies), H. Ray (Northam). Front row:—Messrs. B. Dooley (Geraldton), H. Blythe (Albany), H. G. Hale (Official short-hand writer).



DELEGATES TO THE SEVENTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE W.A. AMALGAMATED SOCIETY OF RAILWAY EMPLOYEES HELD RECENTLY.

(See Page 33.)

By 1904 Ted was running as the prospective Labor candidate for East Perth in the State General Election, and although campaigned hard in the State general election of July that year (a tough call as he was running against Walter James, independent who was the incumbent Premier and Attorney General of Western Australia at the time) lost the seat by a narrow margin. James was also a left-of-centre politician, supportive of the Labor movement, legalising trade unions and introducing workers' compensation in his time. He had also been instrumental in the Federal League at the turn of the century leading Western Australia to federation. Ted's credentials did get called into question at this point, and a letter to the editor in the West Australian in May of that year, commented:

Sir.-I read with a certain amount of pleasure Senator Croft's remarks at a meeting of Mr. E. H. Casson, the prospective Labor member for East Perth, on the action of the Premier

in supporting the Labor Party three or four years ago. If what Mr. Croft says is true, then I say of the two candidates, Walter James and Edgar H. Casson, the former is the one that should get the votes of the workers in East Perth, for in my opinion the Premier has done more for the Labor Party (vide Mr. Croft's remarks) in a month or so than Mr. Casson has done all his life. It would have been more becoming on the newly-fledged Senator's part to point out to the electors of East Perth why they should support Mr. Casson, and tell them what Mr. Casson has done for the workers. But, Sir, I am afraid he would have had a hard job, as Mr. Casson, previous to joining the Railway Association, was an unknown quantity in the ranks of Labour, both in this State and the East. I believe I am correct in saying that Mr. Casson never belonged to a union previously, and as for his knowledge of social or political economy it is of the vaguest type indeed.¹⁷

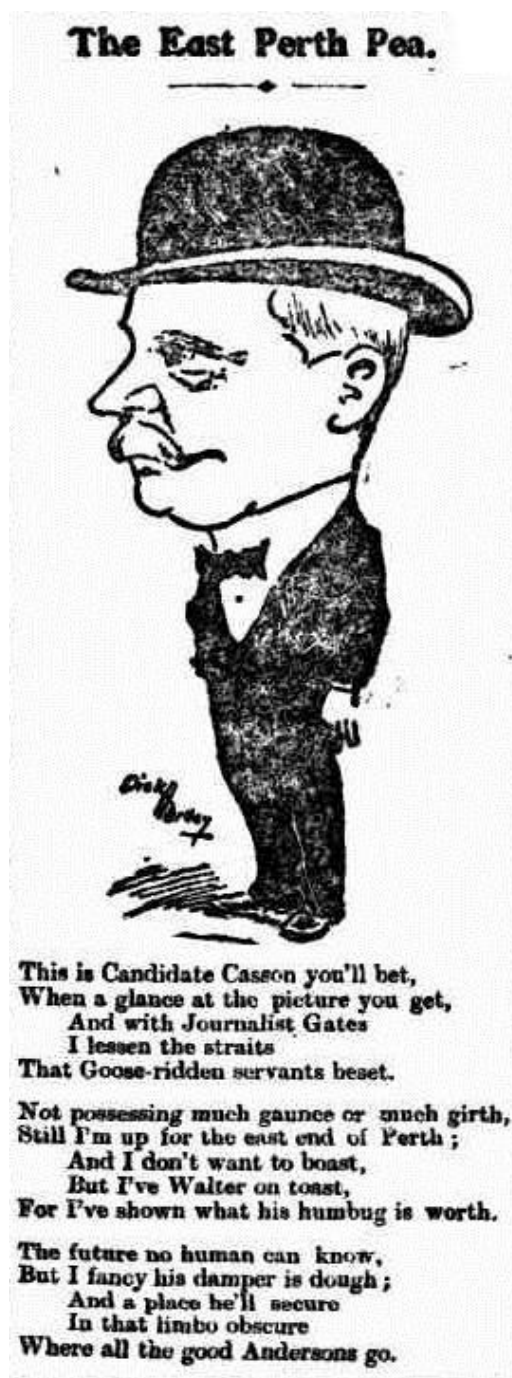
In another article, Ted is given a vote of confidence:

He has fought sturdily and strenuously against the Commissioner for Railways in season and out of season with the pugnacity of a bull-terrier, and has proved himself to be shrewd, capable and energetic, besides being a vigorous and skilful opponent, Casson perhaps lacks ballast: but he certainly does not lack zeal.¹⁸

Ted's political aspirations did make him the target of some criticism inside the union, however the consensus was that he continued to lead perfectly adequately over the campaigning period and should not be penalised for his ambitions.¹⁹ Ted is a popular member, and given notoriety in the press as:

... an indefatigable and honest worker, and it is owing to the high esteem in which he is held, not only by the Railway Union, but the members of all kindred bodies, ... a unionist of many years standing, and although a Victorian, his 10 years residence in West Australia almost entitles him to the name of Groper, as all his interests are now in the land of his adoption. As one of the brainist, solidist, (sic) and most energetic of the favorites, Mr. Casson is the best fitted to take on the big task of lowering Mr. James' colors.²⁰

Ted lost the seat by 121 votes to James – but his near miss of the seat was a pretty impressive result for a political newcomer.²¹ Nevertheless, Labor won 22 Legislative Assembly seats in the June 1904 election and formed a minority government when Henry Daglish became the first Labor Premier of WA, but the party was soon defeated by the Conservatives the



following year. (It was not until 1911 that Labor would win a landslide electoral victory when John Scaddan became the second Labor Premier of WA.) Ironically after the election Walter James who had won the seat of East Perth over Ted was then defeated in a no-confidence motion and resigned from Parliament altogether and fleeing to England to be the Agent General for Western Australia, where he was subsequently knighted. Another election was held in October to fill the role, for which Ted did not run and instead Labor man J. Curran was put up for the job, also losing to the conservative candidate J. Hardwick. Who can say why Ted did not run again, having missed so narrowly in the general election first time around.

In 1905 a light hearted 'who's who' in Perth, (*Through the Spy Glass: short sketches of well-known Westralians as others see them*, by Truthful Thomas),²² Edward (sic) Casson is described as a little man full of energy and bluster as he talks of the wrongs suffered by the working man. "He has no time for capitalists, evidently regarding them as having no place in Nature's scheme." However, "The importance of Casson is fully realised, by himself. Political aspirations (are) in inverse ratio to his stature" (p.79). The book also notes that Ted had rescued the affairs of the Union which was in chaos, and was re-elected by a large majority.

Ted was a union man through and through and clearly well respected for his work, although a foray into State politics was not seen by some as the best target for his efforts. It seems he had tendered his resignation in December 1904 but is then re-elected in 1905 "having put up such a good fight against the Premier". Politics aside, Ted got on with the job, dealing with compensation, working conditions and representing the interests of railway workers and their families on many matters. He was a delegate to the Fremantle Eight Hour Committee and was always delivering speeches and visiting branches and sites, so must have been very busy and away from home a lot.

Ted's next chapter in politics was when he ran as a Labor candidate in the Federal Senate selection ballot of 1906. The *Kalgoorlie Sun* rather humorously summarised all candidates at the time and did not hold back on Ted:

Otherwise Flash Casson, has plenty of ability, but suffers from swelled head and many initials. Is the king pin of the Railway Association. Since he contested East Perth against ex- Premier James, insists on railway men addressing him bareheaded and in awe-stricken tones as Mister Casson or "Boss" Has great skill in tying neckties. If selected will be the largest order in the Senate.²³

Undoubtedly to the left of the party, Ted at times spoke out about other matters and addressed a Labor Party meeting about the perils of gambling, something that could only be quashed by ultra-socialism.

"Those who held up their hands in holy horror at the circumstances attending horse-racing were themselves gamblers in land and to other channels. The State. Mr. Casson urged, should take over the control of turf gambling and lotteries, and thus minimise those evils by better supervision."²⁴

Tragedy (1909)

By 1909, Ted and Susan have four children – Jack/John, (10), Tilly/Matilda (8), William/Bill (6) and Fred (4). They had been living at 237 James Street, Perth, and then 29 May Street, West

Perth. Brother in law John Veitch had rented out a house in May Street some years earlier, so this might have been his house, in which case they had not become homeowners. In May 1909 Ted was mentioned again as a likely candidate for the seat of Perth in forthcoming Commonwealth Parliament; his political aspirations apparently still alive and well. However by the 6th of June 1909 the *Sunday Times* reported Ted's impending retirement from the Union, with some reference to his ill health and lack of attention to detail in his work



On Tuesday the 8th of June 1909, Edgar Harold Casson (35) took his own life, using a bull dog revolver to shoot himself in the temple while seated on grass by McArthur's boatshed on the Esplanade in Perth, at around 4.30 pm. He left no suicide note, and the reasons for his decision remain largely a mystery.

Newspaper reports do however provide some clues as to why Ted chose to end his life. He had apparently threatened to do so in front of his friends the day before. It was believed that he had some 'important engagement' which was expected to ease his troubles, however this had clearly not transpired. Another report stated that he had told a friend of his intention to commit suicide upon purchasing the revolver, who failed to share the alarming confession to anyone. On the day of the tragedy Ted was reported to have called in to the Australian Hotel in Murray Street where friends noticed his high spirits. An acquaintance spotted him at this time and notices "his face deathly pale and staggering, as if drunk".²⁵ Having 'acute diabetes', this may have been a diabetic attack that got out of hand. Treatment for diabetes with insulin was not

common practice until well into the 1920s. Reports state that he appeared unhinged and rushing around the city streets in a manic state, behaviour which could have been a symptom of underlying mental illness, and he was noted to be at times depressed. It was known among Ted's friends that he was 'financially embarrassed' and 'in the hands of the Jews', implying he had borrowed and could not repay his debts, which was weighing heavily upon him. Family stories were passed down that he was a man who had grown up with a taste for the finer things in life and lived beyond his means. Gambling was quite possibly one of his demons. He had also apparently tried a few months earlier to take out an insurance policy on his life, but it had been declined due to his ill health. Reports after the event cleared him of any financial misdemeanours in relation to the Union, however it was suggested by some that his health problems got in the way of his job. Negotiating life and a stressful job with untreated physiological and possibly psychological conditions would have in itself been enough to account for being overwhelmed with life. "Mr Casson has left a widow and four little children and his mother to mourn their loss, and the breaking of the news to them was particularly affecting", reported *The Truth*, newspaper.²⁶ Acting Secretary J. O'Farrell identified the body, having taken Ted's union position when he had resigned three months earlier.

Susan and the children, the eldest aged 11, would have therefore now been without a husband, father and breadwinner. He may also have left debts, which were perceived publicly as the motivation for his suicide. His job was advertised after his death, with remuneration of

£300 a year, which would have been a good salary and a shock for the family to now be without. With little doubt as to the cause of death, his funeral took place swiftly on Thursday the 10th of June, when the cortege left from the family home in May Street, with over 400 people turning out to pay their respects. Interestingly, 'chief mourners' are noted as being his brothers in law, John Veitch and W. English; and Fred Gates and C. Peirie. No mention is made of his wife Susan, a telling custom of the period and the status of women, however Susan does put a notice in the paper thanking friends and colleagues for their sympathies and floral tributes.²⁷

The Casson Kids (1910 on)



After Ted's death, Susan Casson had no choice but to get on with the challenge of raising her four young children alone. Without life insurance and limited welfare support it is puzzling to consider how she would have comfortably supported her family.

²⁸

John ('Jack') Edgar was the eldest, and enlisted aged 18 in 1916 in the Army whilst already working by that time as a civil servant. Conscription was a hot topic at the time, and many in Labor were divided on the issue. John returned from war safely and went on to join the Army reserve in 1939 and stayed in service until 1948. By 1951 he was a government district employment officer involved in national service recruitment. Jack married Alice May Catherine Fry ('Kit'), in 1923, the couple living with Susan in Beaufort Street until they moved in to their own home at 21 Elizabeth Street, North Perth. In June 1926 they had

premature

twin daughters Valma and Catherine, however one twin Catherine, died aged six in 1932, at the same time as Alice Fry's mother (also a Catherine) passed away in Bassendean (image²⁹). Little Catherine Adelaide Casson was buried in an Anglican ceremony at Karrakatta, by a Baptist minister.³⁰ The cortege left Grandmother Susan's home, which was by now at 33 Park Road, Mount Lawley. According to a lengthy report in the *West Australian* (25 July 1932, p.1), floral tributes too numerous to mention covered the cortege and pall bearers included men by this time involved with Susan's mental health work. Kit died in 1962 aged 61 but Jack lived to the ripe old age of 96, dying in 1995 in Melville, and also outliving his second wife Bet.



Three and Two Make Five

Jean, Jack and Nancy Rice (triplets), aged 6 years 5 months, and Valma and Cathleen Casson (twins), aged 5 years 11 months, who are in the same class at the North Perth Infants' School.

Surviving twin Valma married Roy Allen Davies of Claremont in 1951. Son John Henry (who attended Perth Modern School and was a star tennis player as a boy) joined the RAAF to

MARRIED YESTERDAY



Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Casson, after their wedding yesterday at St. Mary's Church, West Perth. The bride was formerly Miss Sylvia Hope, of North Perth.

train as a pilot, and went on to become a flying instructor at Cunderdin. John had been engaged to Carmen Clarke of Sydney when he was a F/Lt with the RAAF in 1946³¹, who had followed him to Perth and got to know the family, but the engagement

was then broken

off and he married Sylvia Hope in 1948 (probably meeting at the Mount Lawley Tennis Club), moving to Nedlands.³² Later John worked with Dick Gard as a builder for some time, before returning to his true passion, flying.³³

Gard-Casson Wedding In Cathedral



for the day, it gained a large photo and feature in the *Daily News*. Dick Gard was a somewhat minor celebrity in Perth at the time, having been a successful interstate rower (bow), State rowing coach and a long-time member of the Swan River Rowing Club (established in 1885). 'Quiet and unassuming', Dick was highly regarded in the rowing world, famously soldiering on

SPECIAL PLANE TRIP



On Saturday a party of metropolitan tennis players left Guildford airport for Kalgoorlie in a specially-chartered plane to take part in the State hardcourt championships. Among the nine players who made the trip were Miss Margaret Heron (left) and Mrs. John Casson; and J. Wood (top left) and J. Casson (the pilot of the plane and also a player).

The only girl of the family, Matilda Casson, who went on to carry the legacy of Susan's early work forward, was married to Perth boy Richard Gard at St George's Cathedral in November 1936. She had been working as a typist, and was still living with her mother and brother at the house at 239 Beaufort Street. Big brother John gave her away and Dick's brother was best man, before a reception held at Keough's Hall (corner of Pier and Newcastle Streets in Perth).³⁴ A rather smart wedding

with his work through a bout of diphtheria in 1935. In 1935 and 1936, while Tilly would have been busily planning their wedding, he coached the West Australian eight who narrowly lost to NSW in the Kings Cup Race on the Nepean River in 1935.³⁵ Dick had made and donated an honour board to the club in 1928, and by 1929 the young Miss Casson was accompanying him to Rowing Club dances.

A year after they are married the young couple are living in Mt Lawley and Tilly remains closely involved with the Swan River Rowing Club which she did for many years to come³⁶. By 1948 she is the vice president of the Swan River Rowing Ladies Club (formed in 1928 tasked with taking care of all the fundraising and social events), and her attendance and attire is frequently reported in the social pages.³⁷ They did not have any children, and lived for many years at 14 Clyde Road, Mount Lawley. Dick originally worked for the Post Master General as a carpenter (building many a fine telephone box) and then developed his own building company and worked closely with Tilly and the Committee to create the growing infrastructure of Casson homes over many decades, joining forces with another builder for a while, Dick Paramoor. Tilly's life was cut sadly short by cancer when she was 68 in 1970. Dick did not cope well and his business collapsed, at which point he returned to work at Casson House in the office, although administration was never his strength. He repartnered with an employee Alice and went his own way, apparently leaving Casson Homes under a bit of a cloud when an unfulfilled expectation around his financial compensation for the time he had spent there became

apparent. Many of the family records, photos and mementos stayed with Dick and, the story goes, were disposed of by Alice. Dick lived to be 96, dying in 2000 in Bentley.



Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Casson

Whose marriage was recently celebrated in St. Mary's Church, Colin-street, West Perth. The bride was formerly Miss Elsie Murray, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Murray, of Angelo-street, South Perth.
(Webb and Webb, photo.)

Next in line was William Harold ('Bill') Casson born in 1903 and first got a mention in the newspaper when he was knocked off his bike in 1920 (he was fine). Civil servant Bill was also involved with the Swan Rowing Club, rowing from a young age and then managing crews and becoming club secretary. Bill married South Perth girl Elsie in 1930 at St Mary's Church in Colin Street West Perth, who was also an active member of the Swan Rowing Club and attended functions with Tilly during her courting years with Dick. Their stunning wedding photo was also published, in the *Sunday Times*³⁸. Bill was four years younger than his cousin Jack Veitch, who was also a rower (Jack Veitch had started rowing when at the prestigious Hale School, however Bill Casson would

have been unlikely to have had this privilege as a school boy).³⁹

Bill and Elsie's daughter Sally was born in 1931 (at 50 Angelo Street where they were still then living with her parents) and then son William in 1935, followed by another daughter Pattie. By then they had moved to their own home in Suburban Road then Mill Point Road, and the kids attended South Perth Primary School. In the family tradition, Bill was interested in Labor relations and was a member of the Civil Service Association Council in 1931 whilst working for the Department of Agriculture. Sally married Edward Andrews in 1952, and Bill and Elsie eventually moved to North Beach. Bill died in Sunset Hospital in Dalkeith in 1979, aged 76 years, outlived by Elsie who died in Trigg aged 1992 aged 88.

SWAN RIVER ROWING CLUB REGATTA.



The Swan Club's Junior Eight, which defeated the W.A. Club's crew: D. Ridley (str.), B. Cooper (7), J. Bramley (6), J. Murray (5), A. Scott (4), T. Blake (3), P. Gard (2), W. Casson (bow).

Youngest son, Fred was born in 1904 and was the last child to remain living with Susan well into his bachelorhood, having moved to 25 View Street in North Perth with Susan by 1937 once Tilly had married and moved out with Dick. Electrician and lithographer Fred married Jean Frew in March 1938 in Maylands, also having their wedding reception at Keough's Hall.



Jeanie's father, William Frew

The couple stayed living with Susan at the house in View Street to begin with. Bassendean girl Jean was born in 1912 and worked as a printer's assistant (they probably met at the Government Printing Office), the daughter of Scottish migrants, boilermaker's assistant William Ganson and Flora (Semple) Frew (who was apparently born with a heir lip and cleft palate). The correct history of the Frew family has proved difficult to research, with some puzzling gaps. There is record of a W. Frew coming to Perth on a government Steam Tug, the *SS Pelican* in 1899 as crew (although this may not have been him) – but there are no other arrival records of any Frews in WA, or indeed their marriage. William and Flora were both born in Paisley, Renfrew (he in 1870, Flora approximately 1871) and the story goes that the family moved out from Scotland and lost a set of twins on the journey out to Perth, although there are no records of this. Census records show William and Flora Frew living at Duke Street in Fremantle by 1903 and also in 1906, however William Ganson Frew is also registered in Bassendean in 1906. By 1912 they are both living in Government Road, Bassendean.

The Frews may have also crossed paths with the Cassons, when William Frew performed a 'Scotch song' at a benefit concert put on by the Amalgamated Society of Railway Employees in 1908. Presbyterian William and family were regular churchgoers at Eden Hill West Guildford, where William often conducted the choir, as well as leading choirs as vocalist and conductor at other Presbyterian churches around Perth. Son Robert was also a singer of note. Mother Flora passed away in 1922 aged 51 when youngest daughter Jeanie was just 10 years old. Without a mother for much of their formative years, the siblings were very close. William died in 1943 aged 74.



Rheumatoid Arthritis ran in the family. Jeanie standing left.

The Frew's first son Robert was born in Fremantle 1901, followed by Neil in 1903, Jessie 1906, William 1908 (died as infant), Ellen (Nelly) 1910 and Jean in 1912. There was an older daughter, also Flora, who was possibly born in Scotland. Flora had married George Preedy by 1916, losing infant children in 1918 and 1921, and died in 1975 aged 81. Also Maggie, who married Ritchie Turtle in 1921, died aged 46 in 1942 (leaving a daughter Jean) so she must have been born in 1896 before the move to Perth. Jessie had married Ken Grosser in 1932. Bob married

Gertrude Garrett in 1930 and died in 1987 aged 87, surviving Gert who died in 1968. Neil Frew died in 1977 aged 74.

Jeanie and Fred had one son Frederick John (known as John), on 24th March 1939 at St Anne's Hospital, when they were renting a house in Ninth Avenue Inglewood. Around this time Jeanie developed severe rheumatoid arthritis and was greatly affected with the pain of her condition, for the rest of her life. The family moved in with Jean's sister Jessie (Grosser) and husband Ken at 87 Blencowe Street in West Leederville. Once more dreadful tragedy struck the family and Fred took his own life in 1946, aged 41 (see later).

Mrs Susan Casson – Call to Service

Women in Labor (Labor Women's Organisation, LWO)

West Australian women had begun to find a voice in politics at the end of the 19th century, with organisations such as the Women's Political and Social Crusade (WPSC) forming in Victoria, which had emerged in Western Australia in 1905 as the Labor Women's Organisation (LWO) (also known as the Women's Labor League). Jean Beadle⁴⁰, who was to become a prominent Labor activist in WA (also coming from Victoria) and one of Susan's closest allies, had established this group in Fremantle in 1905 then Perth in 1911, that had the aim of fostering 'democratic thought' among women and a belief in their rights at work and in the home.⁴¹ But much of their work was concerned with providing charitable support to those in need, and Susan may well have been a recipient of these efforts in her own hour of need, which deeper research into the League and its records could uncover.

The Gospel of Unionism - Susan finds her voice (1911)

Ted's sudden death in 1909 would have left Susan with little material or financial support to continue the raising of her family. She had Ted's mother and sister nearby to help with the children, but it appears they did not own their own family home. Ted's 'financial embarrassment' would have left her with little savings. Child endowment was not introduced in Australia until 1941 and Widow's pensions in 1942, so there was no support from the government.⁴² Somehow they managed. Soon after the event on Friday 23rd July a benefit dance 'for Mrs Casson' is held at the Railway Institute in Wellington Street. John Casson tells of his understanding that the union arranged for Susan and the family to move into the large home in Beaufort Street which was, it is believed, also used as a lodging house for Railway workers who were in Perth from the country (although there are no records to confirm this).

Susan began to place a regular advertisement in the paper the week after Ted's death for 'first class room and board' at in interim home at 46 Aberdeen Street (20s a week). By the following year she has moved to 239 Beaufort Street (also known as Esperance House and 'next to the nurses home'), and continues to advertise for lodgers for many years, now offering double and single rooms. Sub-letting this house would have been her primary source of income and by 1910 she is advertising for a maid to help run the operation.

But Susan did more than just manage her own challenging circumstances. Maybe it was her way of coping, but a few years after the tragedy she began to become involved in helping others in need, and contributing to her community. Possibly the hardship she had experienced in her own life, as well as the influence of her years as the wife of a leading union leader, both led her to develop a strong social conscience and affiliation with the work of the Labor party that was at the time emerging. The Labor Party had won the state election in 1911 and John Scaddan became Premier for the next five years, passing a number of reforms such as workers' compensation and the establishment of many state owned industries. Interestingly, Scaddan was only a few years older than Ted and had also travelled to WA from Victoria and worked 'hands on' in the mining industry until getting into politics in 1904. Ted and John Scaddan may well have been friends. Scaddan was to remain Labor Premier from 1911 until the party lost

the majority in the lower house in 1916. These were fine days for Labor and electorate support was enthusiastic.

It is difficult today to appreciate just how much political and social work was carried out in this pre-war period on a purely volunteer basis. This 'voluntary principle' inherent with the Labor movement (trade unions, friendly societies, co-operatives, adult education and political parties) were all developed by working-class initiatives of self-help and mutual aid, which combined with active participation and advocacy has been fundamental to the labour movement in the twentieth century.⁴³

The Australian Labor Federation recognises women (1911)

When John Scaddan swept the Labor Party to victory in Western Australia in 1911, the win gave some reward to the army of volunteers who had worked so hard to bring the party to power and instilled them with renewed vigour for the cause. In May that year a new women's branch of the Australian Labor Federation (ALF)⁴⁴ was formed in North Perth, with Mrs Casson as president, Mesdames Needham and O'Loughlin vice-presidents, Nurse Abbott treasurer, Mrs Williams secretary. "A considerable number of women have joined, and Mrs Casson, of Beaufort Street, has generously placed a room at the disposal of members for meetings. It is the object of the branch to thoroughly organise the electorate of North Perth, in view of the coming State election, and no effort will be spared -to retain the seat for Labour."⁴⁵ The group soon began to hold fundraising parties and dances, at the Protestant Hall at 160 Beaufort Street, with the Premier Scaddan and his wife sometimes attending, recognising the now crucial work that women were providing to the Labor cause. Indeed social events – parties, dances, balls, carnivals, fetes etc. seem to take place weekly. It was a busy time socially This organising committee (known as the Labor Women's Social Club), on which Susan sat in an honorary role, amongst others such as J.R. Holman, became very active organising events which were a huge hit, and soon moved to bigger venues such as St George's Hall in Perth.

1912 was an important year for women of the Left in Perth, when the first WA Labor Women's Conference was held, in the newly opened Trades Hall in Beaufort Street. Delegates rallied and passed a wide range of resolutions around protecting children, maternity allowances, instituting working conditions and improving education and health.⁴⁶ The treatment of mental health patients was also a topic of concern at the conference, and the need for intellectually disabled children to be separated from adults at Claremont Asylum was recommended. It must have been an incredible time, when this group of spirited women spoke out against fundamental aspects of their society's framework, that today would be considered of third world standard.

Susan was re-elected secretary of the LWO in January 1913 and significantly, also elected as a delegate to the Executive Committee of the ALF. By May of that year her work begins to be recognised, with union leader Alex McCallum speaking in eulogistic terms of her services, and presenting her with a handsome handbag. In June she is elected to the Metropolitan Council of the ALF as the only female delegate from council to the State Executive and attends many meetings in the new Trades Hall. In 1914 Susan was involved in a large bazaar on the Esplanade, which raised over £1,000 an enormous amount in the day.

In July 1915 the branch endorsed Susan to telegraph the Labor Prime Minister, Andrew Fisher, to congratulate him on passing a bill to provide child endowment, a reform the branch had worked hard in the past to raise awareness around.⁴⁷ In 1915 she was also behind efforts

to make sure money is not diverted away from the work to support returned soldiers. In 1916 they are campaigning for early (pub) closing. Conscription was also a hot topic, but divided the party. The Eight Hour Day, one of Ted's pet issues is also of concern to the League. A call for 'white workers' in the laundry industry makes the news, when unemployment is high and Chinese workers are providing laundry services at cut prices. Whatever the League felt to be important in society at the time, would be the target of their concern and support. By 1916 Miss May Holman had become involved with Susan's work if the League, going on to have an important role in the future of Labor politics in Western Australia in future years.

On a personal note, Susan's mother Maria had by now died in Ireland in 1913, however Susan had not seen her since she was a small child. Maria's only child that remained in Ireland, Beatrice, died three years later at the age of 36. There are some surviving family letters between the Irish women and their family in Australia, and the text suggests that there was a continuing correspondence between them, however unfortunately few have survived. In 1914 William Nassau Holmes, Susan's father is recorded as moving to Perth from Rozelle in NSW, and by the electoral roles of 1917 is living with Susan and the kids in Beaufort Street, occupation 'estate agent'. It's possible that she had not seen him since she was a child herself, and was now aged 43. William died a few years later in 1920 aged 81, and had been living with Susan until his death. Susan's sister Frances English is also living in Perth at 4 Hope Street Perth⁴⁸, with husband Leslie who worked for a time on the railways and their children, including nephew Frank (who had contracted diphtheria during his service in WW1 and died in a motor cycle accident aged 22 in Melbourne in 1923). Their daughter Ellen married Eric Fisher at St George's Cathedral in 1921. Leslie English (49) made the news when he pleaded guilty to embezzling money from his employer Boans Brothers in 1917, when working as a despatch clerk, so things might have been tough for them too.⁴⁹ Leslie and Frances moved at some point back to Victoria (possibly for a fresh start after his brush with the law), living in Hawthorn, and Frances died in 1944 in Queensland.

Feminism Dawns – Women's Service Guild (1913)

Beyond the Labor party, the rights and concerns of women were gaining prominence globally at this time. In Perth other groups were forming: the National Council of Women, and the Women's Service Guild of Western Australia (WSG), a cross-party womens' suffrage group (although generally considered conservative) that had been founded in 1909 aiming to educate women on social issues and citizenship, and ensure their standpoint was considered.⁵⁰ Susan was a member of the WSG in 1913 and a large conference was held in 1914. Many of these women came from more affluent backgrounds and were also connected to the exclusive Karrakatta Club, the first women's club in Australia founded in 1894, to which it appears Susan never gained membership.

By 1915 the WSG had 220 members and Bessie Rischbieth was the president, supported by Edith Cowan, Jean Beadle and other leading lights in women's politics of the day such as Ruby Hutchison and Florence Cardell-Oliver.⁵¹ The group took an avid interest in social issues and were instrumental in placing women as special magistrates in the Children's Court and also included as Official Visitors, as discussed later. They also took a somewhat holy stance and agreed that year that members would sustain from alcohol till the end of the war for the sake of their 'influence over their weaker brothers and sisters'. Some women, such as Susan were active in all three women's organisations, however the NCW and the LWO were often known to clash in their views which was to put Susan in a difficult situation in later years. It is likely that

Susan was on the side of the conscriptionists in the ongoing debate that split the nation around this time; a view that was not popular with many other Labor people such as Jean Beadle. In 1918 she denied allegations that she had encouraged workers to vote for conscription, and Alice Rapley criticised her for inviting (Liberal) Edith Cowan to her home to address a meeting on the subject.⁵² Her eldest son Jack had also enlisted in 1916.

Women to the Bench – Children’s Court (1915)

Clearly Susan’s political committee work was not enough to quell her passion for social justice, as when in June 1915 after pressure had been applied from the WSG, a short bill was passed providing for the creation of female voluntary Special Magistrate positions for the Children’s Court. Susan was one of the first to be named on the bench, along with fellow volunteers and Labor activists Mesdames Beadle, Cowan, Mellows, and Rischbieth. The new legislation amended the *State Children’s Act* and provided for women to act as Justices in the Children’s Court.⁵³ Seemingly the group’s passionate belief in the importance of the contribution for the humane and sensitive treatment of women and children in the legal frame was the motivation behind their desire to work in what must have been at times, gruelling sessions. The *Westralian Worker* reported:

The choice is a happy one, as though of varying political opinions, they are good ladies selected are alike, in that each has demonstrated by acts that she has the good of the community at heart, and is prepared to make substantial sacrifices of time and energy for the public benefit. The new departure is certain to be amply justified, and will be welcomed bringing the day appreciably nearer when the women of W.A. will have equal rights of citizenship in every respect.⁵⁴

So was to begin another long and significant chapter in Susan’s life of service. The Children’s Court met in a building known as old St George’s Hall, which was by account dark, damp and gloomy. Its aim was to reform rather than punish, acknowledging that many children came from very poor families, were victims of neglect and had fathers away fighting at War, Magistrates were to deal with all sorts of misdemeanours. Some were of a severe and distressing nature (the rape of children by minors), but many concerned with petty theft, truancy, smoking on the train, and other such offences. The magistrates could dish out anything from strokes of the birch, community service or imprisonment. Some cases were referred to mental health medical staff and treated accordingly (at Claremont Asylum) which would have been very relevant for Susan who was an official visitor by this time and knew exactly the fate that such souls would meet.⁵⁵ Sometime the decision would have to be made on whether the child should stay with its mother or be placed in the care of the State.

Susan was officially appointed a Justice of the Peace in 1920 after the period of volunteering, and the story prevails that while she was presiding over the fate of Perth’s naughty children, her own were often left to roam free range and get up to all sorts of trouble. Her work in the Court is recorded in hundreds of newspaper reports, from which deeper research would no doubt help uncover far more about Susan’s disposition and experiences, however the example below suggests that maybe she had a genuine empathy from experience with many of the cases of families dealing with hardship.

A Callous Husband— Evidence was tendered yesterday, afternoon at the City Court which conclusively proved that Herbert Sydney Cox had deserted his wife and seven

children, in December, 1915, leaving them with only 2s 6d. His wife strenuously endeavoured to locate him, but failed to do so, and it was not until yesterday that the police found him at the Perth Public Hospital, where he was arrested. After full consideration, the Bench — composed of Messrs. F. W. Collett, A. V. Cantor, and Mrs. S. A. Casson — imposed a penalty of twelve months' imprisonment with hard Labour.⁵⁶

In 1925 Jean Beadle became the foundation president of the Women Justices Association of Western Australia of which Susan would have been a member (but for once was not an office bearer), however by 1929 a decision was made that special magistrates and JPs would no longer serve on the children's bench, and a Mr F.F. Horgan was handed sole control of the court.⁵⁷ Female police officers had been in service since 1917, after Labor women had lobbied hard in 1914 for their introduction⁵⁸), but the group held a strong belief that a woman probation officer was also something they hoped to see achieved. A successful campaign to reinstate the voluntary magistrates ensued, it being asserted that as a result of their judgements less than three per cent of boys had reoffended. Since Mr Horan's appointment, it was claimed, more children had been placed in institutions.⁵⁹

Woman Organiser (1916)

During these years, Susan's political career was in full flight. In November 1916 she was put forward as a ballot nomination for the Federal Elections of the ALF. By January 1917 she had defeated Jean Beadle to win the role as 'woman organiser' for the ALF Metropolitan Council (as she follows in Ted's trade Labor steps) to drive women to join unions. Various unions contributed to the cost of the role for which Susan was paid. At a time when many men were away at War and women were stepping up into the workforce, it was an important and timely role. "It now remains for the organiser to get to work, and also for the committee appointed by the Council to draft a constitution, for the proposed new women's organisation without delay. There is abundant scope for energy amongst the unorganised and underpaid women workers of Perth."⁶⁰ The group becomes known as the 'West Australian Organisation of Labor Women' which Susan proceeded to grow, with her colleague Fanny Eccles, to recruit workers and represent the interests of working women.

All trades unionists who have daughters working are earnestly requested to co-operate in the work of organisation, and see that every woman and girl eligible to join is enrolled. The question of the organisation of women is of special importance in view of the industrial dislocation caused by the war, and the new organisation should be made as strong as possible. Rally round the organiser therefore, all ye workers, and give her every possible assistance.⁶¹

Yet more dances and events were held to raise money, with May Holman's 'company' providing musical entertainment at a social at the Hibernian Hall in March, attended by over 300 people.

Susan was reappointed as Woman Organiser in September, however soon after Bill Mooney, Secretary of the United Furniture Trades Union complained that she had not brought many new members. Records show that she had in fact recruited many new members to the Clothing Trades Union and Typographic Union, and her work was regularly celebrated in newspaper articles. Susan resigned from the role in late 1917, stating her decision was due the appointment of a full time secretary of the Clothing Trades Union where she would expect to recruit a lot of new members. ⁶² The *Westralian Worker* reported: "In some respects the

scheme under which Mrs Casson was employed was not by any means a good one. None the less she sounded the gospel of unionism in places where it was badly needed".⁶³ Maybe her confidence had been rocked, or maybe the workload was simply too great for Susan, who was still raising her children, running a boarding house, on the Children's Court bench and involved in a myriad of other political activities. By 1918 Jean Beadle had gained appointment to the role vacated by Susan.

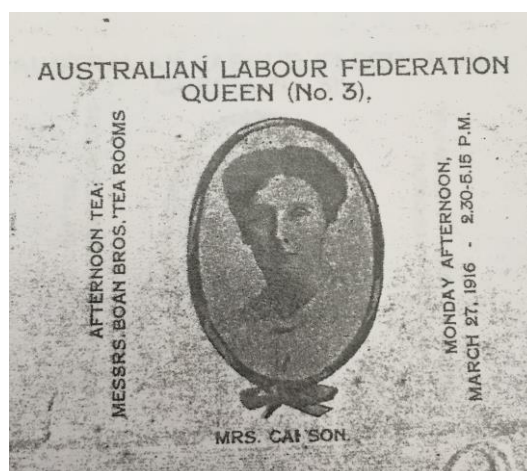
Susan's union work was not over however, and at the time her role as an organiser was coming to an end in 1917, she was busy starting up and becoming the inaugural secretary of the Metropolitan Female Printing Employees Union, registered under the Arbitration Act and attracting 70 members immediately. A log of wages and conditions was formulated, and in 1919 Alex McCallum was roped in to negotiate on behalf of the Members an agreement towards an award to cover wages, hours and conditions.⁶⁴ The Union went on to merge with the Goldfields Typo Union in 1921 and reregistered under the new name of the W.A. Branch of the Printing Industry Employees Union of Australia.

Queen of the Battlers (1916)

Susan's efforts were not going unrecognised, and in 1916 she was nominated by the ALF State Executive as the 'Trades and Labour Queen', - to compete at the annual Queen Carnival - 'Queen of the Kingdom of Giving'.

The honor is well deserved, as Mrs. Casson has been an indefatigable worker in the Labor movement, and has for a considerable time past been a delegate on the State Executive and the Metropolitan Council. The object of the carnival is to raise funds for patriotic purposes, and it is hoped that the response will be so liberal as to do away with the necessity- for any further appeal, for some considerable time. A number of queens are to be nominated by various sections of the community, and the election will follow the undemocratic method of votes being sold at twopence a time. Nevertheless, we must see to it that the Labor Queen gets a heavy vote, for the cause is one that appeals to all. All Labor men and women are therefore urged to place Mrs. Casson at the top of the poll, so that Her Majesty may be crowned in due course, it will be a fitting honor to a great battler...⁶⁵

Lots of campaigning encouraged voters and support for Susan to compete with the other 'Queen candidates' (running for the railways, children's hospital etc.). Boans hosted a vocal concert, with the Boans orchestra at hand for musical accompaniment. Susan (dressed in royal blue velvet) didn't win the Queen Carnival on May Day unfortunately, with the crown taken by the Southern Queen from Katanning that year after heavy polling in the country.



Mobilising Mental Health

Susan's work in the Courts exposed her to many of the problems of the socially underprivileged in Perth at the time, and of the most acutely pressing of those was the lives of those recovering from mental illness. Since 1900 mental illness had gradually received more attention and investment in Western Australia upon the appointment of Sydney H. R. Montgomery as Asylum Superintendent in 1901. Montgomery was instrumental in the choice of Claremont (with good access for visitors and staff and amenities) as opposed to an isolated rural location for the building of a new mental health facility to replace the asylum at Fremantle, opening Claremont Hospital for the Insane in 1912.

Official Visiting (1915)

'Official visiting', including non-qualified members of a Board of Visitors had been taking place in WA since the original *Lunacy Act 1871* was enacted. In 1914 a group of Women's Service Guild representatives (including Edith Cowan and others) waited upon the then Colonial Secretary to ask that a professional woman be also appointed as a visitor, to look after the interests of women and children in the system⁶⁶. Eventually, against the backlash of severe misogynistic scepticism, a lengthy parliamentary debate approved the new Act (Section 7) which made allowance for a 'lay' woman to sit on the Board of Visitors.⁶⁷ One politician warned of appointing a 'social gimlet, or inexperienced, energetic and mischievous woman'.

In May 1915 Susan Casson was appointed as an Official Visitor to the Claremont Hospital for the Insane, (Lunacy Act Amendment Act 1915, No.28, Sect 7), alongside incumbents Dr W.P. Birmingham and Mr W. Darbyshire, a solicitor.⁶⁸ It's a little puzzling to understand how Susan was nominated at this point for the position, as she did not begin her work at the Children's Court until June of that year. Her (reported) public life at this point had been limited to her work with the women's branch of the ALF in Perth. Given that the Board of Visitors' remit is to provide an independent avenue to patients who were concerned about their rights or welfare, there was some synergy with her previous union work.

The group would have been busy, making regular and often unannounced visits to a range of facilities that came under the rule of Inspector General Montgomery, until his sudden death in 1916, at which point deputy J.T. Anderson stepped up (until he died in 1920, also before the age of 50). A facility for male alcoholics had been opened at Whitby Falls in 1914 and by 1916, Green Place in Mosman Park was created for 'female inebriates', reflecting the generalisation



Green Place, Mosman Park (Grove Library)

of alcoholism as a mental illness at the time (although anecdotal evidence says it was also a place that staff from Claremont Hospital ended up in their dotage). In 1918 the Board of Visitors also took on official visiting roles at the Stromness Military Hospital, an old house on the corner of Keane and Monument Streets in Mosman Park, where no doubt plenty of post-traumatic stress from those returning from the Front would have been their concern.

Stromness was replaced by Lemnos Hospital in 1926 (and the building demolished in the 1960s).

By this time there was reported overcrowding of nearly 50 per cent at Claremont. Various high-profile cases kept the institution and its 'appalling conditions' in the news, including the significant Mables case that led to a Royal Commission in 1921. The Mable husband and wife were held in Claremont with little strong evidence to support their deprivation of liberty and limited records produced to warrant the decisions made by officials. Their subsequent release also highlighted the lack support and care available to patients upon their release. The investigation also put Theo Anderson under the spotlight, who had been known to have had a drinking problem. The general lack of humane care for the mentally ill in an institution where "life was as cheap as sand" made the press regularly. During hearings Susan had been given the opportunity to voice her views on the experiences of people held at Claremont when she gave evidence as a witness in Court. She raised a number of issues: the challenging work carried out by nurses and their need for better conditions and protection; the inadequate diet offered patients; filthy conditions; and in particular, the fear that she has in recommending discharge for a patient knowing there is no support once they leave, and recommending that the processes needed government attention and the assistance of 'suitable people'.⁶⁹ But any help, financial or otherwise for people leaving institutionalised care in Perth was to be a long way off. She also famously made a comment at the hearing that asylum visitors unsettled patients by telling them they did not need to be there and should be kept to a minimum, a peculiar comment for which she received criticism in the press.

In 1921, under the Amended Lunacy Act, the Board of Visitors for Claremont and the mental ward at the Perth Public Hospital was expanded to include Dr D.M. McWhae (who later became Chairman) and Mr J.L.B Weir (accountant), making up a team of five. "In accordance with the Act, a majority of the board is required to visit each institution and inspect every part thereof at least once a month, and also to see all patients in order to give each patient a full opportunity of complaint."⁷⁰ This team were to work together for many years to come, and all strongly support Susan's work into after care. Dr Birmingham had worked at Claremont with Montgomery since it had opened in 1904, and he and Susan Casson were be close colleagues for many years, being the first President of the after care Association.

Susan had survived on little income since Ted's death, apart from the money made from taking in lodgers, so the (undoubtedly modest) salary, referred to in Minutes in later years, that came with the role of Official Visitor would have been very welcome. It is likely that after Ted's suicide six years earlier she had become acutely aware of the risks for individuals and their families surrounding mental illness and become quietly active in this arena. Although there are no records of any mental illness suffered by Ted Casson (or indeed his son Fred), it is very likely both did experience challenges of this nature that could have been considered socially shameful at this time, particularly for men of their political and social prominence. Ted was often referred to as being full of passion and wind; a high that may have been accompanied by lows, only seen by those closest to him.

Mental Health After Care

Connecting the Asylum with the Community & Christmas Cheer (1919)

The first indication that Susan wanted to do more than just report on conditions was when a public appeal was announced in 1919 by the Minister controlling Claremont Asylum, Mr Brown, to provide 'Christmas Cheer' for the 'inmates' of the institution. "Mrs Casson, one of the official visitors has undertaken to take charge of the appeal"⁷¹ and donations asked to be sent to her home in Beaufort Street. This was the embryonic event that was to represent that nature of Susan's work for the rest of her life, establishing an organisation that would support people after mental hospitalisation in the community, for the next 100 years. Susan worked her contacts and by 1920 the National Council of Women has appointed a committee of ladies who undertake to assist Mrs Casson on her 'laudable' effort. A year later the Inspector General published a comment in the newspaper to reflect on this as having given the patients 'their best Christmas ever'.

The Royal Commission held in 1921 that brought mental illness into the public eye also exposed a system that enabled unreasonable detention, and the lack of support for people upon release was a hot topic. In 1921 an 'After Care and Christmas Cheer Committee' was set up by the Visitors, (Dr. Birmingham. Miss F. Eccles, Mrs. A. Casson, and Mr. D. N. Martin) and held a fete and dance on the river to raise money.⁷² £150 was raised that year to put on a special day of games and events and food, with Inspector General Anderson dressing up as Santa Claus. The event became an annual fixture in the calendar at Claremont for many years to come, managed by the Board of Visitors Committee.

The Mental Hospital After Care & Comforts Fund Association (MHACCF) is Born (1922)

On the 1st June 1921 a number of concerned people met at the Town Hall to consider the formation of an After Care Association, to operate outside the realms of the Claremont institution that was clearly not fulfilling this identified need. It was generally agreed that people could not be discharged from Claremont without adequate welfare and support arrangements in place. The reality was that the social services required to ensure that support was in place was non-existent, thus blocking the way for many without family or friends to progress back to the community. Convened by Mayor Lathlain and attended by Edith Cowan, Susan Casson, medical men Dr Birmingham and Dr Clement and others, the group fleshed out the remit for a group to support for people who were discharged from Claremont.⁷³ The Association would: "take in them a kindly interest ... Board and lodging could be given to the penniless, tools, and a job supplied".⁷⁴

On the 26th of January 1922 a meeting was held in the National Labor Party Room of the proposed 'Mental Hospital Comforts Fund'. Dr Birmingham (the medical member of the Board of Visitors) is elected as President, Mrs Casson as Treasurer and Miss J. Eccles as Secretary. Trustees Messrs Hodge, Levy and Rhodes also attended and H. Boare and Patrick Connolly are the first Patrons. Patrick Connolly was a colourful wealthy racecourse owner, who may have been an early benefactor. Indeed the WA Trotting Association are noted later as a frequent and generous donor (ironic as Ted Casson had vehemently criticised the benefits gained from horse betting). Mr Barblett and Mesdames Breydon, McLean, Griffiths and Mann are also on the Committee – there was no lack of interest in its work (although it may have been the motor cars these ladies owned that allowed the group to get around Perth to do their work that was

of equal attraction to Susan at the time). She had also roped in fellow Board of Visitor officials Dr Kasner Moss to the role of 'honorary surgeon' and Mr Darbyshire as 'honorary solicitor'. Darbyshire had a high profile in the business world and was chairman for Homes of Peace and the Kindergarten Union. Dr Moss was president of the BMA in Perth, member of the Medical Registrar Committee, Medical Officer for the Perth City Council and one of the town's best known medical men of the day. Susan was certainly making the most of her friends in high places. She was instructed to open a bank account and early rules and conditions were agreed. The fund's work had begun.

Susan and other members set immediately to work. Thus began their weekly welfare work, visiting people, assisting their needs and finding a way to assist; be it with material items, medical needs or cold hard cash. Regular meetings were held to discuss the cases and divide the work. The women were instructed to form a Committee that would do the other major work of the group: fund raising. This was to take the form of a wide range of events supported by organisations such as the Royal Automobile Club, as well as regular 'sweeps'. In May the Minister Mr Brown wrote to the group with his support and stated he will Gazette the Association to avoid Incorporation Fees. By August they have been in correspondence with the Colonial Secretary who concedes they must become registered body, and refers to a quarterly instalment of £25 to be paid to their account, suggesting that some government funding had been secured.⁷⁵ 'Subscribers' to the fund (and members of the Committee) are to pay 2/6d per year, which goes up to £5 in 1935. Not only were the members giving their time for free, they were also funding the work.

At a meeting on the 3rd November 1922 the name "Mental Hospitals After Care and Comforts Fund" is agreed, and Susan's niece Nellie English joined the committee. On the 28th June 1923, The Mental Hospital After Care Comforts Fund Association Inc. (MHACCFAI) is registered under the provisions of The Associations Incorporation Act, 1895.⁷⁶ Equally exciting must have been the installation of a telephone at Susan Casson's residence this year, deemed necessary for the heavy load of work taking place. Thereon, much of the work of the group is concerned with fundraising events and the distribution of support to those in need, this work filling the Minute books and no doubt keeping them busy. It is the constant need to help people to find work or become self-employed, furnish their homes, pay for a dentist, or often just giving them money to survive that formed the core of the honorary group's work. Stories in newspaper articles share with the public how the group have helped women 'of normal intellect' who have suffered (breakdowns) from the general hardship of life get their lives back on board with the assistance of the Committee.

Mrs Casson is therefore now wearing two hats, one on the After Care Committee for the Board of Visitors; and also for the broader work of her own Association. The 'Christmas Cheer' appeal raised money for the annual Christmas event that is put on by the Committee enjoyed by approximately 1000 residents, and also the work by the MHACCFAI (which are sometimes confused in the press). The two groups worked in tandem with each other and supported each other's aims and events. In 1925 the Fund conduct their inaugural River Trip for the 'inmates' of Claremont Asylum, which was to be the first of many. The trip took place on the *SS Perth*, with an orchestra on board, a visit to Point Walter and cigarettes kindly donated by the Ugly Men.⁷⁷ It was a great success, and continued for many years, soon on the *SS Zepher*. Trips taking children to the Zoo are also arranged, with varying success. The group also supported regular shows at the Princess Theatre in Claremont for inpatients, which it did so via money from a bequest left to Asylum by pastoralist Walter Padbury. Annual general meetings are held

at Susan's homes in Beaufort Street and then at Park Road, Mt Lawley; and although Mrs Florence Dodd (wife of unionist Hon Jabez Dodd MLA, Labor then National, and a recognised women's activist of the period) is now the President, a position she holds until her death in 1942, the association is very much Susan's baby. In total the committee was made up of approximately twelve members, and whilst work would have been shared between the group, Susan as the secretary and treasurer would have done the lion's share.

Inaugural President William Payne Birmingham died in 1927 aged. Unusual for someone of his standing, he was a member of the Ugly Men's Association and also the Turf Club, which might account for the donations that were channelled into mental health after care from these two organisations. He had been a prominent medical man in Fremantle (District Medical Officer) and Greater Perth for some forty years, an active (Irish) Catholic, and often gave his services gratis to help alleviate the 'sufferings of the poor'. Dr Birmingham worked right up to his death, and was reappointed as an Official Visitor for Claremont, Green Place, Whitby Falls and Perth Hospital alongside Susan, shortly before he passed away. Interestingly, he was also be the owner of the very first motor vehicle license plate issues in Western Australia, 'Number 1', which he had transferred to his 'New Rugby Six' in 1926 (Dr McWhae, Patron, had Number 3). His wife Isobel was to survive him for another 20 years, moving to the country after his death. Birmingham's successor, Dr Bentley, also a leading light in the history of mental health in Western Australia was not to join the Committee until 1934. Bentley had spoken out about the increasing pressure on Claremont Hospital in 1929, particularly for women and would have been very happy to know there was a decent 'overflow' option such as Woodville Rest Home.⁷⁸

The *Mental Treatment Act* 1927 had made it impossible for patients to be moved from one facility (such as Claremont to Heathcote) without the consent of relatives and a swathe of other administrative parties.⁷⁹ Of course, in these years, those with intellectual disabilities, addiction issues and mental health illnesses were often grouped together, with little consideration for their individual needs. Children and adults were also routinely hospitalised in the same facility.

In 1926 Susan's mother in law Matilda passed away, having been cared for by her daughter Sarah and husband John. Susan's own children were growing up, and 1930 her second son Bill married Elsie, first son Jack having married Kit in 1923. By then Susan, Tilly and Fred were living at 33 Park Rd Mt Lawley, thus her years of running the boarding house in Beaufort Street were over. In 1932 the family prepared for another sad death, that of five-year-old granddaughter Catherine, one of Jack's twin daughters, the cortege leaving from Susan's home.

Thus life continued for Susan Adelaide Casson throughout the 1920s, – her work on the Children's Court (which continued on until 1930), as an Official Visitor, furious fundraising for the MHACCFAl, managing the disbursement of funds and looking out for those in need of after care, seeing her children grow into adults and leave home, becoming a grandmother, and her membership of the various women's organisations in Perth; the WSG, NWA and LWO. Just liaising with the range of people the Association was supporting would have been a lot of work. By 1927 Mrs Dodd is President; Breydon and H. Mann Vice Presidents; trustees J. Hodge A. Eby and T. Taylor; and the committee is made up of Mesdames Griffiths, Ryder, Noble Norton, Eccles, Kenniwell, Jones, and Mr Philips. Mr J.L.B. Weir is honorary auditor. In that year money raised also paid for wireless sets for Whitby Falls and Green Place, gramophone records, books for the library and equipment for the weekly picture show. In the minutes of a meeting held in

1930 Susan notes that she has written 200 letters asking for donations for the Christmas Cheer fund.

Minutes from a meeting in 1931 note that the Inspector General proposed to provide an annual contribution to the organisation of £40 per annum 'with the object of or providing to the Hon Sec for the amount of useful work carried out by her, starting from 1st April 1931. Susan explained to the Committee that the Government had reduced the salaries of the Board of Visitors and this could mean she would have to take a position elsewhere or go into business.⁸⁰ This new arrangement meant that Susan continued to get money from the government to support her, one way or another.

From Ugly Men to Lotteries

As well as receiving some support from the Government, (as well as The Trotting Association who were regular supporters of many charities at the time), the MHACCFAI owed much of its early survival, from 1922 to 1933, to the generous financial input received from the Ugly Men's Association. Established in 1917, The Ugly Men's Voluntary Workers' Association Inc. was formed in response to the poverty experienced by the working classes before Commonwealth welfare programmes were implemented in the 1940s. Although Labor ruled WA from 1924 when Phillip Collier came to power and worked hard to bring about a minimum wage, times were still tough for many. The group was made up of lower-middle and working class men who volunteered to provide for their own welfare in predominantly the inter-war period, and were a major force in the cultural life of Perth in the 1920s. The Ugly Men administered voluntary labour, fundraising and events with over 2000 members and 21 suburban branches. Unlike the middle classes, the Ugly Men saw their work as 'assistance' rather than 'charity', at a time when life in Western Australia was still less than idyllic for many.⁸¹ Their 'Uglieland' or White City amusemant park on the Esplanade was hugely popular, as was a subsequent site in Fremantle, however opposition from some women's groups and church councils imparting their moral standards resulted in its closure in 1929, 'a magnet for larrikins and loafers',⁸² and the eventual demise of the Association in 1947. Sometimes particular Christmas Cheer fundraisers and 'stunts' or carnivals would be held at White City, on behalf of the MHACCFAI. Minute books regularly mention White City, and that a regular contribution to the Association from particular nights at White City are channelled in their direction.

In 1932, often referred to as the 'darkest hour of the great depression', the Western Australian Government led by Nationalist Premier Sir James Mitchell created the Lotteries Commission, with a Bill introduced by 'Happy Jack' John Scaddan, in a bid to control the illegal lottery operators who were capitalising on the misfortunes of the unemployed and poor of the day. Lotteries (a form of gambling) had been regarded as evil and immoral because they undermined a strong work ethic, seen as important to underpin a healthy capitalist society. It was a sensitive issue and many women's organisations opposed it in principle. The creation of the Lotteries Commission in effect legalised gambling for the first time, but put it in an ethical framework driven by social responsibility.⁸³ To this day unique in Australia, the West Australian Lotteries Commission, now Lotterywest, is essentially structured to allow funds raised to be channelled into charitable and benevolent purposes. As 'The Mother of Charity' the Lotteries Commission has been able to respond to community needs with a form of 'selective welfare' as the West Australian community has grown and required help in a variety of sectors.

The first round of grant allocations were made on the 24th of March 1933 and the MHACCFAI were in the first set of charitable organisations to receive £100 – ahead of the Scouts or RSPCA who only got £50. It was just as well, as the Association notes at its AGM that year that income was at very low levels. Another £125 was received from them in September. By this time the Ugly Men's donations had dried up, the rich stream of revenue from Uglieland having ceased some years earlier on its closure. Nevertheless, in the meantime, the work of the Association continued, hosting the annual river trip and supporting as many people as possible to find accommodation, employment and a sense of worth, not to mention keeping them out of Claremont Hospital and subsequent savings for the public purse.

In 1933 the committee alerted the public via a news article to the financial challenges facing the MHACCFAI, and noted that the purchase of a rest home at which the committee had aimed for years, was still very much in the air. If the Lotteries Commission refused aid for another 18 months, the after care work would have to stop.⁸⁴ The Association had been 'saving up' to build a rest home, but as the need was so great, all their funds had been spent on supporting people with their after care – approximately £500 a year.

Leading lights in the medical world, Dr Bentley and Dr McWhae accepted the positions of Patron in November 1934, and their gravitas was most certainly a great help for lobbying the Lotteries Commission. Dr Bentley had been appointed inspector general of the insane in 1926, and administered the department until 1939. He was to devote much of his time and energy at Casson House in the following years. Bentley suffered the stress of a claim of incompetence (for which he was acquitted) in 1938 by the under-secretary for Health, at which time he was sacked and then reinstated (in a somewhat reduced capacity) after a lengthy appeal. Dr Douglas McWhae was another chap from elite Perth circle. Educated at Melbourne Grammar before studying medicine, he moved to Perth in 1908 before being at the landing at Gallipoli where he lost an eye (and later wore a monocle), but went on to assume distinguished medical roles in London for the ADMS and then returned to a medical career in Perth, where he then became a brigadier in WWII. He received the *Chevalier de la Legion d'honneur* in 1915, CMG in 1918, CBE in 1919 and VD after ten years in the service, and was honorary physician to the King from 1941 to 1945. McWhae was on the Board of Visitors for 36 years, dying in 1969, and was best known in Perth for his car, a Nash, which during Dougie's whole professional career in Perth it continued to carry licence plate no.3. Whatever she was doing, Susan was certainly managing to convince the right people to be on her side. The group pleaded to the Minister for Police, Mr Millington, to put in a good word for them with the new Lotteries Commission, and by 1934 the MHACCFAI they had managed to secure a commitment of £500 per annum.

A home of their own

In 1935, the Secretary notes that she has been busy looking around at potential properties for a potential rest home of their own (including trips to Peppermint Grove, Buckland Hill, South Perth and Joel Terrace Maylands), now they had the £500 in the bank from Lotteries. On 3rd May 1935 a Draft Resolution is tabled to purchase a property at 2 Woodville Street North Perth⁸⁵ from a Mr J.A. Thompson for the purchase price of £1,800 – £200 in cash and the balance by weekly payments subject to an interest rate of 5% per annum. An advertisement for a Matron was published, furniture purchased and donations gratefully received, including blankets and linen from Central Arcade. By June 1935 nine female patients are resident at the home, and by September 1936, 60 women had passed through their doors (many short stays it would seem). The members grappled with the fact that they were no longer able to afford to support so many people in the community, but felt that creating the home was a worthy cause.

Woodville Street was originally named Parker Street until 1915, and was part of the Woodville Estate, a residential subdivision in North Perth developed by Solomon Herman and Thomas Whitton Williams in 1898 as the second subdivision in the area, in the triangle formed by Angove, Farmer and Parker Streets. The building at number 2 is first listed in the Wise's Post Office Directories in 1912 as No. 2 Parker Street, with Thomas Baxter, builder, as the occupier, followed by Joseph Thomson to 1914 upon which time it was occupied by Nurse and Mr Carslaw (Bute Private Hospital) until 1917. It is in this time that the building may have been adapted to make it suitable for the hostel it was to become. Between 1918 and 1934, Joseph Thomson is again listed at the subject site, although what he did there is unclear. Water plans from 1914 illustrates it had a veranda that ran the full length of the street frontage, and another at the rear. A brick stable was located at the north-east corner of the site boundary. In 1935, a hatched portion was added to the existing kitchen and in 1938, a side veranda, made of wood, asbestos and iron, was erected to the west. The Wise's Post Office Directories list the building as the After Care Rest Home in 1935 and the Rest Home in 1940, with Sister Moncrieff and Nurse L. Enright as the person in charge respectively. The building today holds significant heritage value as an 'institutional building of Federation Arts and Crafts style', with a high degree of authenticity.⁸⁶

The area was certainly Susan's manor. She had moved a few times in the past couple of years, from her home in Park Road, to 28 First Avenue Mount Lawley, to her new home at 26 Stanley Street Mount Lawley. Now nearing the end of the Great Depression, North Perth was an area that was becoming settled and somewhat lively. The North Perth Town Hall had opened much earlier in 1902, around the same time as the hotel on the Corner of Fitzgerald and Angove Streets. The area had a tram service by 1906, and in March 1910 the tramline was continued up Fitzgerald Street, turning left into Angove Street, a service that operated up until the early 1950s.⁸⁷ The Rosemount Picture Theatre had opened in 1927, adding an open-air garden in 1936, and the Rosemount Hotel had had a 'makeover' in art deco style. Branches of the Commonwealth Bank and Bank of New South Wales were established in Fitzgerald Street.

A band of fine women – Who were the MHACCFAI?



Members were to come and go, but quite a few stayed for many decades. They all gave many years of hard service to the MHACCFAI, and some were of particular significance in WA at the time and deserve to be described in a little detail.

Florence Dodd was the President from 1924 until her death in 1942, travelling to North Perth for meetings from her home in Mosman Park. Florence was the wife of mining unionist the Hon Jabez Dodd, MLA (in the Scadden Labor ministry, then National) who she outlived for many years after his death in 1928. Jabez was vocal in his views against conscription and also introduced a bill in parliament in 1919 to propose that women have the right to become members, which then saw National candidate Edith Cowan elected in 1920. A public park in Mosman Park still bears his name. Florence was however a significant women's activist of the period in her own right. She was instrumental in the establishment of King Edward Hospital for Women, President on the Advisory Committee. She also worked on committees to support returned soldiers through two world wars, and suffered the loss of her eldest son Charles who died in Perth in 1933, aged 34. For 19 years she presided over meetings of the MHACCFAI and was greatly mourned by the members upon her death.

Foundation member Andruitta Breydon (who lived until 1964) was appointed the next President in 1943. Her husband James was the Secretary of the Federated Engine Drivers Union (and possibly a colleague of Ted's) and they also lived nearby at 136 Chelmsford Road, and did not have any children. She was also Secretary of the Perth Bridge Club, which might account for the feature the game played in so much fundraising activities of the organisation.



Mrs. Alice Rapley, J.P.

Alice Marion Rapley, a leading member of the MHACCFAI for many years, was a member of the Australian Labor Federation (Queens Park delegate) and secretary of the Labor Women's Organisation by 1926, under President Jean Beadle, until she herself became President. Alice was married to a carpenter and had four children, living at 31 Ebsworth Street and then at the smart address of 128 Joel Terrace in Mount Lawley, with 'picturesque grounds on the bank of the swan river' where she would often hold Labor functions. Red Alice was a staunch socialist and tireless campaigner for workers' rights, industrial legislation, trade unions, compensation for work-related injury, and suffrage of both men and women. She joined Susan on the bench at the Children's Court as a JP and then later in the Perth Police Court, and was president of the Women's Justices Association. She was on the Committee for the Maylands Institute for the Blind, secretary of the Women's Peace Movement, involved with the Child Welfare Department and campaigned against the flogging of sexual offenders. Alice was always referred to by her own, rather than husband's initials (unusual in the day).

Frances Keough became a member of the Association in 1936. Frances' had married Gladstone who's parents Edward and Rose were pioneers at Rottnest Island, his mother Rose 'Ma' the long-time proprietress of the tea rooms and State Hostel (once Aboriginal Prison and Boys Reformatory) which opened for the 'season' in 1913/14, followed by the tea rooms in 1917, the year Ma took over the running of both. By 1918 bookings were advised in the newspaper to be made early to get a place at the 150 bed hostel which provided a separate dining room with nurse for children, and a 'high class chef from Melbourne'. Ma campaigned against a Hotel being opened at Rottnest, keeping it welcoming and wholesome for families. Glad had married Frances Hibberd in 1917, and after a time spent on Rottnest, they lived on the site of the family's new business venture, 'Keough's Hall' where the family had opened a catering and reception business in 1916, at the corner of at 113 Newcastle Street, Corner of Stirling Street. Many events such as fundraising nights and family wedding receptions were held there. Ma Keough was a well-known identity in Perth, mainly from her Rottnest days, and her funeral in 1929 was widely attended and covered in the press. Gladstone and his sister Ethel got into trouble in 1931 when they failed to comply with awards and pay their staff enough. Frances went to court over the matter, charging Union secretary Cecile Shelley with assault over the incident, after Shelley broke into the premises to examine the wages books and the two ended up in a tussle.⁸⁸ Who knows what Susan and Hospitality Union secretary Fanny Eccles (to whom Gladstone's late mother had left money in her will a few years earlier) would have made of that. Gladstone and Sister Ethel dissolved their partnership soon after and Gladstone took sole charge of the business. Frances later became president of the MHAACAI in 1950 holding the post until she died in August 1952, survived by Glad and children Gladys Ethel Rose and Thomas.

Mr E. Needham was also a member of this Committee and bought strong political credentials with his membership. Labor man Edward (Ted) Needham had started his immigrant life in Perth working in the quarries of Rocky Bay, however he quickly moved into a career in politics as the Member for Fremantle in the Legislative Assembly and then to the Senate in 1906. He was Leader of the Opposition in WA and won the State seat of Perth in 1933 where he remained until 1950, and his sister Elsie married Prime Minister John Curtin. Ted was a strong supporter of the work of those trying to provide for the needs of people with mental illness in WA, both hospitalised and in the community, and particularly for children. Ted worked with the Board of Visitors and the MHACCFAI for many years representing their endeavours (with his rather good connections) until his death in 1956, and wife Elsie was a long time serving member of the Association, dying in 1963 aged 79.



In 1947 another foundation member of the association, Frances Margaret (Fanny) Eccles, also passed away, aged 73. Spinster Fanny had also been a union girl, president of the Hotel and Restaurant Employees Union and delegate to the Labor Congress. She worked (and lived) for many years at the Court Hotel in Beaufort Street, and where the MHACCFAI would sometimes hold their meetings, and round the corner from Keough's Hall. Later on Fanny resided in Parry and Newcastle streets, also living her life in the area, was a close friend of the Keoughs, and was left money when 'Ma' Rose Anne Keough died in 1929.

Mrs J. Noble Became Vice President in 1948. Her husband John/James Noble had been an active member of the Miners Union, Tally Clerks union and ALF delegate, and had died in 1915 in Wooroloo of TB contracted in the mines. She was active in the Women's Labor League in Kalgoorlie, and was herself an active ALF member. Jabez Dodd had died at her address at 'Homeleigh' 85 Bagot Road Subiaco in 1928, so she may have been a nurse. She lived until 1970 aged 90.

Getting on with the job (1935-38)

At the 14th AGM held at National House in September 1936. Dr K. Moss presided over the meeting when Mrs Dodd is elected President, J. Breydon and Mrs Stone Vice Presidents, Chairman Dr J Bentley, Deputy Chairman Mr E.E. Gillett and Mrs Casson secretary and treasurer. Matron Shawross, Mesdames Jones and Rapley, and Messrs Aitken and Dr Fox are also on the committee. Dr McWhae is Patron.

With a building, 16 'inmates' and four staff to manage, the responsibilities of the Association had increased. The decision was made to meet monthly, and an executive committee formed. More bank accounts were opened to keep funds coming in and out for the after care work and rest home separate. Although the home was now being managed by Matron Green, Susan and son Fred were sometimes called upon to retrieve 'escaped' patients. Fred was also Susan's driver, in her big Chryslern (she had never learnt to drive herself). In 1937 a successful Christmas Fete was held at the Town Hall around the corner, assisted by new Committee member, Susan's daughter Tilly (now Gard). Son Fred and his wife to be, Jean Frew, are also noted as providing valued assistance. It must have been very satisfying for all involved to be able to run an event like this so close to the new rest home, and sense their identity in the community becoming established. By now Susan and Fred are living at View Street, around the corner from the home. Bridge nights (member Mrs Breydon is the Perth Bridge Club secretary),

bazaars, the annual river trip and other events continue. Finding suitable staff to work at the home was sometimes a challenge, as so few had appropriate training to deal with the special demands made by mentally unwell residents.

In 1938 a donation was received from a Mr S.M. Evans with the intent being to open a similar rest home for men. However such a departure was still to be some years away, as the Association struggled to make their funds stretch to the after care work (which supported men as well as women) and running of the home for women. That year they secured an overdraft against the property from the Bank of New South Wales, given the 'small amount' they were receiving from the Lotteries. A highlight of the year would have been youngest son Fred's wedding to Jean Frew, however the couple continued to live with Susan at View Street.



Heathcote Hospital Ward, 1939 (SLWA)

Rising concern for the care of the insane in WA led to a Royal Commission in 1938 into Mental Institutions, in particular the by now 'dilapidated' Claremont Hospital. Susan and fellow official visitors Dr Kasner Moss and B.H. Darbyshire gave evidence, that the conditions were 'like a prison', as well as suggesting that Heathcote needed to be run separately to avoid stigma for those with less severe conditions who were sent there. Moss also promoted the use of other institutions such as Whitby Falls, enabling patients to get involved in agricultural pursuits, and that there needed to be more after care options for those discharged.

Confident in her own work, Susan also stated at the hearing that she believed that all rest homes for discharged patients should be under the supervision of the Inspector General. In June 1939 a poorly constructed article appeared in the *Sunday Times* which highlighted the appearance of 'back alley rest homes of the wrong kind', which profited from mental health care in unregulated conditions. The article went into depth about the ample Lottery funding received by the MHACCFAl (£1,735 since 1933) and its lack of 'official status' and trained staff, although implied that there were other operators making profits out of mental health hostel accommodation who were not connected with this, at least publicly known, organisation. Such articles probably did little to instil public respect for the work of the MHACCFAl in the wider community.

That year the Association bid a fond farewell to retiring Matron Shawcross who was also a member at that time. Matron Shawcross has been the target of much attention during her career at Claremont and Heathcote having been reported and investigated for being 'uncooperative' and harsh, however she had obviously remained on the right side of the MHACCFAl ladies.

Investment and Expansion (1939)

Meanwhile demand kept increasing, as did the work placed upon Secretary Susan. Thus in February 1939 members Noble and Keogh proposed that the Secretary be paid a salary of £3 per week, which was carried unanimously.

In January 1939 architects (Messrs Eales, Cohen and Fitzhardinge) were consulted and plans drawn up and to significantly extend the building, which had been fixed up and patched for many years, adding a new double storey frontal addition to create more accommodation to cope with increasing demand, and a home for 20 more residents. The Bank were supportive, plans agreed and a tender from contractor H.A. Doust for £2,140 accepted. Although initially passed by the Perth City Council, the permit was then revoked in May due to a petition from residents, citing 'yellings and shoutings of deranged persons'. The case brought to light some unprecedented problems that the existence of such a facility had to contend with. Was it a 'hostel' or in fact a C Class Hospital? The conclusion was arrived at that indeed it really should have been registered as the latter when first opened. Should the approval be made purely by the Council's Buildings Committee or involve those with zoning powers? After a long fiery debate in the Council chambers on 8th June 1939, the Lord Mayor cast the deciding vote after a hung committee to the extension being approved.⁸⁹ The resulting work now forms the façade of Casson House visible today. Curiously little note is made to the interruption that the significant new front extension must have caused, to house the expanded community of over 40 residents.

In July 1942 President Florence Dodd passed away. She had provided many years of service to the MHACCFAI and Susan, Fred and Tilly published a notice in the newspaper expressing their sadness at the loss of their 'esteemed friend'. At the meeting directly after her death, members remained standing out of respect and deepest sympathy for the loss of their friend and comrade. 1942 was also the year that Jean Beadle passed away.

In September 1942 the members agree in a special meeting to take the opportunity to purchase the adjoining deceased estate at 8 Woodville Street, for a price of £850. The Council would not allow the new building to be also called Woodville Rest Home thus the decision is made (May 1943) that the new home will be called Casson House (although at a later date the two properties become known as Casson House). Come July, seven patients have moved in, with 43 patients housed in total. By now after care work is now greatly diminished, with just £50 annually coming from the Government for this service.

By 1943 all borrowing against 2 Woodville Street is paid off. Accounts show a regular surplus in income against expenses which easily allows for any borrowing to be regularly reduced. The financial position and health and happiness of the patients is a pride to all. Honorary services are supplied from Dr Bentley, Solicitor Mr Gillett, Mr J. Weir treasurer and Rev Lindley for Church Services. The MHACCFAI have worked tirelessly to establish themselves since inception for twenty years by now and have now well and truly laid the foundations for a strong organisation. A windfall in March, a bequest of £200 is announced which will further help, from the estate of a Richard Stanley Sampson; politician, newspaper printer, and apparently shrewd investor in rural properties. Generous Mr Sampson (and a 'friend' to the Committee) shared his wealthy estate to Werribee Boys Home, Salvation Army, RSPCA, Church Missions amongst many others.

On the downside, there are however constant issues and shortages with staff, a regular worry for the members, and the 1944 minutes note how helpful several patients assisted nurses with housework. Requests for new admissions keep coming thick and fast. In 1945 there are 59 patients and a 'great need to extend our two homes', at which time Dick Gard, Matilda's builder-husband is requested to come and advise. Dick Gard is given the go ahead to

conduct an extension to Number 8 and states that he will carry out a portion of the work himself on weekends.

When Peace is announced in 1945 the President notes 'we were so overcome with joy we gave the Patients of the rest home a Victory Party'. Susan noes at the AGM in 1945:

I would like to mention briefly in presenting this report that it is 10 years since we first started the Rest Home. The result of our enterprise over these years has been truly remarkable, and we may well feel pleased with our success, when we consider in that time we have passed through the tail end of a depression and a War, the magnitude of which, we in our wildest dreams did not realise to what depths its tentacles would reach nor the many restrictions self-sacrifice and sadness it would enforce on our social life.⁹⁰

The year also witnessed the death of two founding members, Mr B.H. Darbyshire and Dr M. Kasner Moss, who had been pivotal in the establishment of the organisation.

Kindness to patients by staff and donating bodies is often mentioned by the members, a key component of the organisation's culture. Throughout these years Christmas Cheer fundraising carried out in partnership with the Board of Visitors continues, providing a Christmas party and river cruise for 300 patients from Claremont. In 1946 ginger beer is donated by Mr Jacoby, cigarettes by Wills & Michelides and barley sugar from Plaistowes.

More sorrow for the Casson family (1946)

Around this time Jeanie, son Fred's wife, developed rheumatoid arthritis and was severely affected with the pain of her condition, which would be the case for the rest of her life. The condition ran in her family, and anti-rheumatic medication did not become widely used until the 1950s, so she would have had little relief from the pain. Fred, Jeanie and John lived with Susan at the house in View Street, until her bedridden conditioned deteriorated so much that she needed a level of care that Susan could not provide. The family moved to live with Jeanie's sister and her husband in West Leederville. Fred, by this time working as an electrician with H.R. Grant of Beaufort Street, and often helping out at Woodville Street, left to stay overnight (on Valentine's Day) with his mother Susan at the house in View Street in 1946, when he took his own life, aged 41. Susan discovered his body at 5.30am on the morning of 15th February on the floor of her bathroom at View Street, with the unlighted bath gas heater turned on and window and door closed. Neighbour Reg Campbell and fireman Edward Smith carried him from the bathroom and although resuscitation was attempted, Fred Casson was announced dead by Dr R.J. Wheeler when he arrived at the house.

Yet again Susan was forced to bear the unfathomable grief of suicide within her immediate family. An inquest into his death found that Fred had been in 'ill health and worried' for some time. News articles noted that he had suffered from a 'bad leg' since childhood, and family gospel tells how he was injured there by big brother Bill with an 'aboriginal arrow that contained a poisonous tip' when the boys were playing as children. He also had whitlow on the thumb (a herpes infection of the fingertips) and carbuncles (skin abscesses).⁹¹



If indeed his father Ted Casson had grappled with mental illness, it is possible that son Fred may also have inherited and endured the challenges this inflicts. The tragic irony of this devastating event on everyone cannot be underestimated, but must have been especially poignant for Susan, who had devoted her life to helping others battling with the difficulties of poor wellbeing. No mention of Fred's passing was made in the MHACCFAI minutes. John Casson has little memory of his Father Fred's funeral, however his life changed dramatically at that point. As Jean struggled to care for her son, John was sent away to live with various family members, including a cousin in Merriden, until he and Jean could eventually live independently some five years later.

Susan, Fred and Little Johnnie. Image Courtesy John Casson

Reward and Recognition

In 1945 plans had begun for another big building project, a rear extension to Number 2 Woodville Street that could facilitate the dream of being able to house 100 people. Again Architect Mr Fitzhardinge is consulted, and in 1946 building permits issued and tenders invited, the cheapest being from R. T. Gard (£3,455). This is well beyond the budget, but yet again the Lotteries Commission steps in to help with a grant of £2,500. Fitzhardinge is instructed and Richard Gard, who is now a member of the Committee, appointed (on a percentage basis) to conduct the work. The Bank of New South Wales assist with the balance. Clearly the added pressure of the overdraft payments caused some worry for the Committee in the year or so that followed, as discussion around budgets and their rigid adherence gets plenty of discussion at meetings, and a request to the bank to reduce the payments. The Government are still only providing £50 for after care, however the Christmas Cheer fund still manages to raise a few hundred pounds each year, supporting the annual events.

Vice President Mrs Stone remarried to become Mrs Prosser in 1947 and moved to Albany, so foundation member Mrs Noble became Vice President. Fanny Eccles died in 1948. The Committee 'are unable to find a photograph of Ms Eccles' to put on the wall, and instead decide to have a stone with the names of all foundation members installed in the new addition (which is not visible today). The board of this day were active members of the organisation and participated with annual events such as the River Cruise (buying food and supplies) and working on 'busy bees' to make curtains and furnishings for the home, coming with their own sewing machines. The kindness and devotion of Committee members and staff towards the residents and the home is regularly acknowledged in the minutes as crucial in its success.

A Gong for Susan (1948)

In the New Year's Honours List announcement of 1948, Susan was awarded with an MBE(C) - The Order of the British Empire - Member (Civil). It's not until June 1949 however, when Susan is 77, that she is presented with the MBE by Governor Sir James Mitchell at a special investiture at Government House, an incredibly meaningful recognition of her life's work.⁹² Mitchell was a Liberal politician and 'benign autocrat' having been Premier in the 1920s, and whilst not best recognised for his political talents had seen through some significant changes in Western Australia, including welcoming women into Parliament and the development of primary industries and migrant labour programmes.⁹³ Mitchell had been made Governor in 1948 but his days in the top job were short and sad, when his wife and all but one of his children died in 1949, and he himself died two years later (and was also apparently suffering from senility by



this time). The award gave the media an opportunity to focus on Susan with some well-deserved recognition.

Less than two years ago the woman who has done so much for so long for the "little faces" as she calls them-the women who have come to share the love and comfort of the home and who deserve more of both than can be found in large institutions-was honoured for the noble work done over the better part of a lifetime in this cause by the award of the M.B.E. She is Mrs. S. A. Casson. You can hardly have failed to hear about Mrs Casson and the work she has been doing for so long, but the chances are that you don't know very much about her really for her work takes her so much along byways not trodden by the multitude. And this charming old lady is extremely reticent about her own activities. Extremely. Direct questions bring little information. But if you watch her as she passes among her "little faces"-and she is a constant visitor to the home bearing her name-you will quickly realise the quality of the flame that burns within; and recognise it for a single-minded devotion to those who stand in need of help.⁹⁴

Also in 1948, the Committee vote that Mrs Gard should become Assistant Secretary, to help with the ever-increasing workload on Susan. Now well into her seventies, Susan was aging and stories of her later demise into dementia would suggest that this process may have begun to take hold.

Building for the Future – another major extension (1949)

By the end of 1948 the work on the large rear extension was nearing completion but the building cost estimated by Dick Gard was now looking to be in the vicinity of £7,250. This was far more than had been anticipated, and significantly greater in cost than any previous capital work. A swift overdraft is put in place in February 1949 and by June the building is complete and celebrated with a party and renamed Casson House, "to stand forever as a monument to our noble secretary", as noted in the minutes. It is interesting to note that J.L.B. Weir, is the honorary treasurer *and* auditor, an unusual combination of roles (and recognised with an annual payment). Chartered Accountant James Weir was an 'outstanding man in the business world' and Perth identity of the period with significant pastoral interests, and had been the Mayor of Claremont as a much younger man.⁹⁵

By the late forties mental health nursing was becoming recognised as an area of specialism. Some patients were by this time going to Heathcote for shock treatment, and Dr Bentley is noted as giving shock treatment at Casson House by 1950. Dr Bentley is a regular visitor to care for patients, and is awarded an honorarium of £52 per year. Matron Settle was in charge of the home and greatly respected by the Board, assisted at times by Margaret Ross, who then stepped in as Matron in 1952 when Matron Settle left to get married.

Decanting (1950s)

The mental health service environment was changing in Perth, and Casson Home was well positioned to support the flow of people that were soon to be discharged from large-institutional care. Following on from a psychiatric nurses' strike and subsequent new pay and conditions award in 1948, public interest in life at the relatively closed world of Claremont Asylum was being aroused. In 1950, *Sunday Times* journalist Laurence Turner faked his employment at Claremont and famously outed the institution as a place of (sometimes) violent

treatment and general degradation.⁹⁶ Another Royal Commission ensued and medical staff bore the brunt of criticism for poor training, records management and maltreatment. Ultimately the enquiry uncovered an urgent need for better resourcing, and drew unprecedented public focus to life inside a mental hospital.⁹⁷ In 1954 there were 1,494 patients at Claremont, 50 of them children.

Sure enough, things were soon to change. The era of deinstitutionalisation was about to begin, although it would be a long time until the population at Claremont significantly decreased. A national study was commissioned by the Federal Minister for Health Dr Earle Page in 1955, and the subsequent 'Stoller Report', authored by Dr Alan Stoller (once a senior medical officer at Claremont) reported massive overcrowding nationwide, also highlighting dire conditions at Claremont. In particular, the report drew attention to the urgent need for outpatient services. The report gave way to significant Federal investment in State run mental health in Australia, with a focus on outpatient services.⁹⁸ Psychiatry was finally to begin its progression away from the confines of hospital walls.

The next Inspector General of Mental Health Services, Dr Digby Moynagh (1958-1967) began the process of establishing patient management outside hospital.⁹⁹ In 1956 the first outpatient clinic in Perth, Havelock Clinic opened in West Perth, and supported by the emergence of antidepressants and antipsychotic drugs, the mental health care model began to change in Perth. Complementary professionals such as psychologists, occupational therapists and social workers became part of the recovery process (although social work was not offered as a university course in WA until 1964). Trailblazer Moynagh strongly believed that the path to rehabilitation lay in putting the community in touch with mentally ill patients who were until then isolated and hidden from the public eye.

In 1959 the Graylands Day Hospital opened on the grounds of Claremont Hospital, to treat people with acute illness, yet not requiring admission. The name 'Graylands' was chosen to distance the facility from the stigma associated with the now infamous Claremont Hospital. Ironically Graylands is now the asylum-associated name. All treatments were available for day patients (apart from narcosis treatment which was popular at the time) and nursing staff were trained to develop a therapeutic relationship with patients.¹⁰⁰ Moynagh defended the new approach to his critics by pointing out that the reason Claremont was so full was that many inpatients had actually recovered from their illness, but were unable to live in the community as they had been stripped of their basic living skills and had nowhere they could go, apart from hostels. Thus commenced the dawn of a community approach to mental health care that is the blueprint for today, and the reversal of the increasing population of people living long term at Claremont, up until the sixties.

End of an Era

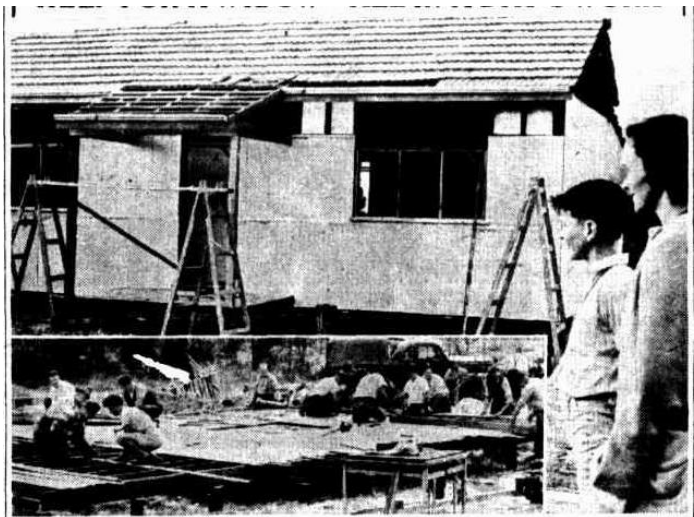
Time was marching on and the stalwart group of women on the Committee were not getting any younger. In February 1950 President Mrs Breydon tenders her resignation due to ill health and is succeeded by Frances Keough, and Vice President Mrs Noble is also absent due to serious illness.

In 1950 Susan finally retired and hands over the reins of the MHACCFAI to her daughter, Matilda (Tilly) Gard. Leading activist for the rights of women and children and Health Minister at the time, Mrs Florence Cardell-Oliver paid tribute to her 'work of earnest charitable

endeavour. Florence and Susan went back a long way with their shared connections with the Women's Service Guild, however Florence was a conservative and moved in the more elite world of the Karrakatta Club, and herself made a Dame (DBE) in 1951. Susan also retired from her position on the Board of Visitors after 30 years of service. Tilly was nominated to take Susan's place on the Board, however Dick was not keen on this and felt her work at Casson House was enough so Susan was succeeded by Mrs V. Stockmin who was president of the state executive of the Women's Auxiliary of the Returned Serviceman's League. The three remaining foundation members in 1950, Mesdames Casson, Noble and Breydon were made Life Members. At this time the home at 25 View Street was also sold and she moved in with Tilly, with the proceeds being shared between her children (and Fred's share going to John Casson, who was to one day then buy the property back, and use it as the cornerstone for the new St Rita's Nursing Home).

Jean Casson's House Built in a Day (1951)

As a widow and invalid mother, son Fred's widowed wife Jean faced a bleak future, although she would have received some government welfare. While Jean was living with the Preedies in Bassendean she did manage to improve her health to the point where she was able to once again live independently and take care of her son through the help of a naturopath Mr W.A. Rayner – a radical and emerging treatment option in the day - and regain some mobility. Rayner had been fined in the magistrates court previously for providing misleading medical advice, however his treatment seemed to certainly help Jean. By 1951 she was living in a room at a friend's house, a Mrs Whitford, in Iolanthe Street Bassendean. The Preedies were stalwarts of the Church of Christ in Bassendean and a fellow



member of the congregation, a builder named Stan Gale of Maylands offered to help Jeanie and her son by building them a house with volunteer labour. Stan Gale gathered 48 tradesmen and labouring friends to famously build her 'a house in a day' in Anzac Road in Bassendean. A neighbouring landowner, Mr Gamble, had taken pity and granted the sale of the half-acre block at a preferential price. Friends had raised £93 to help furnish it. Jean and son Johnnie are photographed in the paper, looking on at the incredible feat taking place before their eyes.¹⁰¹ However, payment for the land and materials had to be raised, and an appeal was launched by the Civilian Maimed and Limbless Association to raise the money.

After they moved in, John was able to attend nearby Eden Hill Primary School and then Midland Senior High, whilst serving as his mother's primary carer until the age of 16, when he left home and got an apprenticeship at Joe Millard's Panel and Paint Shop in James Street in Perth. John had an adventure driving to Melbourne in a Hillman Minx to gain experience in the trade, before returning to Perth and slowly being drawn back to Casson House, where he soon became a valued member of the Committee and staff, before eventually taking over the operation in the 1970s. Jeanie lived to be 74, dying in 1974 in Homes of Peace, Inglewood. Her home, built in a day, still stands today.

Susan Passes (1952)

By the time of her retirement, Susan had been a JP and member of the Board of Visitors to Claremont Mental Hospital, Lemnos and Sunset Hospitals for 30 years. Although clearly suffering from dementia in later life, she was still insisting on attending board meetings right up until late in 1951. Susan died in Heathcote Hospital on the 23rd April 1952 aged 80 years, with 'senility of several years'. She was buried at Karrakatta Cemetery with husband Ted.

In her secretary's report following Susan's death, Tilly writes: "Her memory is a guiding hand that inspires us one and all to continue her great work and to complete her one desire in life, the establishment of a home for the weak and needy, free of all liabilities and encumbrances". The Inspector General of Mental Hospitals, E.J.T. Thompson wrote personally to Tilly expressing his sorrow and noting that Susan 'had not really been with them' for some time. Sister in law, Ted's sister Louie Vietch, living at the time with daughter Ella and her husband Charles Spencer at 23 Woodroyd Street also died in October 1952. It was a busy year for funerals.

Changing of the Gard

Fortunately Matilda, at the time of Susan's death, had spent many years working with her mother as Assistant Secretary at MHACCFAI and was able to confidently take over when she became secretary in 1952. Matilda was not as socially-politically driven as her mother and was affectionately known as 'the silvertail' of the family (appreciating a life of a bit more affluence and aspiration than Susan). Assets were now in the region of £20k, and an overdraft of £5k from the last major building project was still being managed and patient numbers remained steady at around 60. But the world of mental health care was starting to change, and the new era for Casson House was also emerging against a fresh set of ideas around mental health within the community.

By all accounts Tilly, supported by husband and fellow Committee member Dick ran the home with professionalism and compassion, that was by now the Organisation's defining core cultural value. Living memory still exists of Tilly, for example by Bert Yates who started at Casson House as a maintenance man in the early 1960s, and remembers her as having very clear and particular ideas about how things should be done and what she wanted. If something wasn't right, it had to be changed. Dick was still Vice President of the Swan River Rowing club at this time and the couple lived at 14 Clyde Road in Mount Lawley. They were also keen East Perth Football Club supporters (although John was a Swan Districts man) and both were well respected by their staff and all that knew them. Bert Yates answered an ad for a carpenter in the newspaper in 1961 and upon arriving on site, was told by a staff member to start work on a job, not meeting boss Dick for another week, who became 'like a father' to Bert and always kind to the staff and residents. Bert has continued to work at Casson House in varying roles for over fifty years. The culture was always such that Bert and also Tilly's nephew John would often do odd jobs around the place on the weekends without payment

Business as Usual at Casson House (1950s)

It was business as usual for everyone at Casson House when Tilly took over, and the everyday challenges of looking after the 60 residents carried on, with the professional help of Matron (Margaret Ross) and a trained nurse, as well Dr Bentley's weekly attendance. The 1950s were still very much the age of the asylum however, and the belief that people with significant mental illness were best cared for in a residential environment was still dominant and thus fully supported the existence of Casson House. By this time there were around 1500 patients at Claremont, who were catered for at the annual picnic and river cruise, with funds raised by the Christmas Cheer appeal and coordinated by the MHACCFAI committee members. Planning for these events take a lot of time and space in the minutes.

In comparison to earlier years however, the 1950s were a quiet decade for the organisation, with little mention in the press of their work, apart from small grants that trickle in from the Lotteries Commission. The minutes note a wearing down of the overdraft and overall smooth running. The staff help out by keeping fowls at the site to produce their own supply of eggs, which in fact require them to register with the government as an 'egg producer' with more than 19 chickens kept on site.

President Frances Keough passed away suddenly in 1953 after a short illness at the young age of 59. Frances and Gladstone had sold the function business Keough's Hall in 1950 and had retired to a new home at 6 Regent Street Mount Lawley (which incidentally was the old house that Ted Casson's sister Louie and her husband John Veitch had resided). She had been

re-elected as President just before her death so her passing must have come as a shock to all. Mrs E.M. Mincham (also often referred to as Minchin) stepped up to the role, and became President in 1953 until 1955. Mrs Noble re-joined the thinning committee once again too. President Mincham was invited to meet the Queen, on behalf of the organisation during the Royal visit in 1954 at a function for women's organisations, and residents enjoyed getting out to wave to HRH passing in the street. As appears to be an unfortunate pattern, Edith Mincham's time as President was also relatively short, when she also died suddenly in 1955 aged 65, leaving £100 pounds to the committee and was replaced by Mrs Noble. John Casson joined the Committee around this time, and began to be groomed as the next Casson to later take the helm. Also in the group now was Mr Bill Crawford, as well as Mr and Mrs Aitken, Mrs Cooke and Mrs Risby. Kit Casson had also joined the committee in the ensuing years, being a valued member until her sudden death in 1962.

Generous Benefactors

Purse strings were kept tight by necessity, and most costs incurred were related to building maintenance and equipment. New mattresses were purchased around this time, and old furniture sent to the Mogumber Mission, a Methodist Aboriginal children's mission that had opened at Moore River in 1951.

Casson House was however often the beneficiary from generous benefactors, and still benefits to this day from the estates of supporting individuals. Bequeathed funds were received from the estate of childless widower Percy B. Sears (a director and major shareholder of the Swan Brewery) in 1950. James MacCallum-Smith also left money, a newspaper man (owning the *Sunday Times*) and Labor politician, in 1955. MacCallum-Smith was described as 'a humourless Scot who made every pound a prisoner'¹⁰² and also had no children, which ultimately saw £700 of his money come to Casson House in 1960. In 1957 a letter was received by the secretary from Stone James solicitors asking for information on behalf of a client who was looking for suitable charitable trusts for their will. Dorothy Kitching, a friend of Matilda Gard's also made allowance in her estate in later years to support Casson Homes.

Most notable of all however was Mr William Rookwood Vale Randall (also known as Buxton William De Winton Randall), a sometime-resident and long term friend of Susan Casson. Apparently a shabby but sophisticated eccentric English gent (son of an English clergyman and known to often wear a pith helmet) and one time farmer from Bunbury, he wrote many letters to the newspapers on a range of topics. He was also acknowledged to recognise his own challenges, and insisted on helping others like him as a posthumous legacy. Newspaper reports noted that he had deserted his wife when his own mental illness took hold soon after their marriage, and she was left destitute and pregnant, with the baby dying at birth. He always promised his estate to MHACCFAI and indeed left £3,630 upon his death, which he had saved over a period of thirty years for the purpose, when he died in 1958 at the Eleanor May Rest Home at 23 Lawley Crescent Mount Lawley. A notice appeared in the WA Government Gazette (10 October 1958) by the Supreme Court for anyone with a claim against his estate to contact the WA Trustee, and his wife eventually received an annuity of £120 a year (although Mr Randall had clearly specified she was to get nothing). The Committee made sure that the disbursements from the estate went towards paying for small comforts for those in their care, boosting the 'after care' fund, in particular the needs of male patients at Claremont, and not towards paying off the Casson House overdraft, as was his wishes.

Matron Ross



Matron Margaret (Margie) Ross, pictured far right, was in charge at Casson House for many years and ran the place with compassion and efficiency, and always with the highest standards of presentation and grooming. She and Dr Bentley are regularly acknowledged as the backbone of the organisation at this time. Staff and committee members often helped out with work and maintenance, such as when Matron Ross, her husband Ken and son Colin painted the dining hall in preparation for the Christmas party in 1953. The minutes in 1954 note that the committee helped Matron 'lay the new lino upstairs' - her work was clearly varied. Margie Ross tendered her resignation for retirement at

a meeting in February 1955, and was replaced by 'lovable personality' Matron Stone (however Margie often came back to work in emergencies). She was presented with a 'chrome stool' as a gift and accepted as a member of the committee, where she and husband Ken was to serve for many more years, and later take on the role of secretary.¹⁰³

In comparison to today, staffing levels in these years were considerably lower, with staff doing 24-hour overnight shifts; making good use of the Nurses' quarters and separate staff dining room. It was also quite the norm for residents to help out with many domestic and general chores around the place, one even chopped the wood. In 1952 'Miss McDermott' is noted in the minutes as an invalid pensioner who gets to keep her full pension in exchange for doing the laundry. It is often commented by those who have memories of these days how the participation of residents in the daily work was a benefit for all, providing a sense of value and daily objective. Traditionally, asylum patients would help with all aspects of institutional life at Claremont Hospital this involved tending the in-house farm, which was a valuable source of 'therapy'. There was also however rules and standards that were placed upon all residents at Casson House, and those with 'dirty habits' or uncontrollable behaviour were swiftly returned to Claremont.

Yet another Extension (1957)

Matilda Gard was most proud in 1957 of her refurbishment of the garden and outdoor seating area, spending over £214 on brickwork and wrought iron work for the project. The garden was entered in the *Sunday Times* garden competition, winning a gift of a super-spreader and bag of lawn food. A brick incinerator was built in 1958 and rotary clothes hoists installed. Everything was running smoothly, but the committee was still committed to the dream of being able to accommodate more residents. Back in 1953 Dr Bentley, who continued to attend all meetings and remained a 'tower of strength' for the home, had proposed that they should seek more Lotteries money for yet another extension to accommodate 40 extra patients. In December 1957 Dick Gard was eventually directed to proceed with plans for a further extension to Number 8 Woodville Street, quoting £12,000. A letter was sent to the Lotteries Commission in January 1958, and a grant of £5,000 duly awarded, with an overdraft of £4,800 requested from the Bank of New South Wales. Work commenced by Dick and his team soon after, including the

new 'wandoo mosaic' parquetry floor for the lounge and entrance. An official opening of the modern new building was held on 30th November 1958 in the presence of the Minister for Health, the Hon. E. Nulsen, M.L.A. Tilly notes in her Secretary's report of 1958 that "the old ramshackle building has been completely restored and replaced with a very pleasing design." In good health, the Committee attracted three new members that year too, Mesdames Boelin, Davies and Gormley.

By the end of 1959 there was a record 88 residents, and hardworking staff were acknowledged as being underpaid with a pay rise granted. A large deep freeze was donated by the Lotteries Commission and a phone installed at Number 8. In 1959, "given the number of young people now resident in our home", Mrs Gard suggests that a television set could be purchased, which was warmly agreed to by the Committee and an aerial also installed. A well/bore and garden reticulation was also instructed and installed at significant expense, but ensuring the gardens were kept lush and green. By 1959 there is still some support being administered in 'after care' for people other than Casson House residents, funding for example wireless license fees at Heathcote and Whitby Falls, and money for Claremont patients to attend the Royal Show.

A raft of new patients were admitted in 1960 transferring from Claremont – with most of them aged in their thirties and forties. Teenage girls from Nathaniel Harper Home had also been taken in and kept busy with craft and other work such as making swab packs. In 1961 it was decided that a general purpose recreation hall to facilitate therapeutic work and socialization would be a valuable addition to the facilities in Woodville Street. Dick Gard produced plans and set to work building the 'rec hall' which was designed with the purpose of aiding recovering and socialisation.

Changes in management and staff (1960-1965)

Mrs J. Noble passed away in 1960 and the Presidency was taken up by Tilly, which she held until her death in 1970. Matron Ross took over the now vacant role of Secretary receiving an honorarium of £100 a year, with Mrs Gormley as assistant. Margaret clearly was not a typist, and the minute books once again reverted to hand-written entries. Maintenance manager Bert Yates started working for Dick and Tilly at Casson House in 1961, and was invited to join the board almost immediately – the beginning of a relationship that was to endure for over fifty years. John Casson and Bert Yates were officially welcomed to the Committee in February 1963, joining the 'other' John Casson, hence two of Susan's grandsons were now taking part.

Dr Bentley, who had served the organisation for many years (and received an honorarium of £150), also resigned in 1961 due to ill health, to be replaced by Dr Fitzgerald (sometimes assisted by Dr Gray and Dr Wheeler). Dr James Bentley died in January 1962 aged 82, having been active in community mental health since his retirement as Inspector General of the Insane in 1942. The following year, E.J.T. Thompson also died, having taken over from Bentley in the senior public role, which he had held until 1958.

In March 1963 the committee agreed to contribute £10 to the Pioneer Women's Appeal for a fountain in Kings Park, now an important feature in Perth's civic landscape. Generally life progressed smoothly at Casson House, with regular visits from women's church groups, and the Graylands Choir. Some residents went out to work, one travelling to Cottesloe each day to work as a domestic help. Handiwork classes, jam making and other activities also kept people

industrious. That same year the committee agreed that it would be a good idea to install a swimming pool, with residents making a small contribution to the cost. Bert Yates revealed that this was to eventually be drained and removed, as it was difficult to keep hygienic with the ladies often relieving themselves in the water.

Mental Health Gets Attention

In the early sixties Claremont Hospital was still home to over 1700 patients and employed some 600 staff.¹⁰⁴ Oral histories from staff employed at this time speak of the very formal relationships that existed between doctors and nursing staff, the former usually doing 'long range diagnosing' through a window.¹⁰⁵ Dr Harry Blackmore took over as Psychiatrist Superintendent at Claremont in 1967 and oversaw the discharge of hundreds of patients, as well as supporting specialist training for nursing staff. Casson House worked closely with the major care providers, in 1967 for example they took 16 ladies from Claremont (although eight were readmitted). By 1972 Claremont had 'closed' and reopened as two separate hospitals, Swanbourne for long term and psychogeriatric patients (which then closed in 1987) and Graylands for acutely unwell admissions. John Casson remembers first-hand the significant impact of Dr Blackmore in driving the development of alternative hostel accommodation for patients being discharged from Graylands. Blackmore spoke publicly against mental health stigma, apparent from the public discrimination aired when patients were noticed being discharged to a rest home in Mount Lawley.

Deinstitutionalisation was reshaping the whole environment for the mentally ill, and it was not to take place without its challenges. Early hostels that emerged to take discharged patients were not registered, and were little more than basic boarding houses. Community care nurses would visit at three-weekly intervals to administer medication by injection, but there was little more in the way of follow-up care. Side effects from this early generation of anti-psychotic medications were also particularly unpleasant; pacing, drooling and oculogyric crisis that caused a patient's eyes to roll backwards. A move to community-based care brought with it a whole new challenge for practitioners regarding non-compliance around medication. The social, cultural and economic environment was also changing, with rising recreational drug use, family breakdown and industrial unrest impacting on social and psychological instability. In 1964 the University of Western Australia for the first time offered in training psychiatry.

The historic and long-running Whitby Falls site in Mundijong, set up as an ancillary institution in 1897, expanded in 1958 and was degazetted to function as a hostel in 1972, before finally closing in 2006.¹⁰⁶ Green Place in Mosman Park, which had been operating as an annex to Claremont for female psychiatric patients also continued to operate as a hostel, managed by Mental Health Services until it closed in 1979 when a number of patients from Green Place were noted in the Minutes as being relocated to Casson House.

Mental Health in Western Australia in the early 1960s also experienced a shake from the raft of new legislature to support the shift to community care and restructure of Claremont Mental Hospital. The new *Mental Health Act* 1962 was written to replace the *Lunacy Act* 1903, and in 1964 The *States Grants (Mental Health Institutions) Act* was passed when the Commonwealth matched one third of State spending on mental health buildings. A Charter for Mental Health Services was prepared by the directors of the State Mental Health Services, and endorsed by State and Commonwealth ministers in 1967.¹⁰⁷ For the first time a distinction was made between the mentally ill and intellectually disabled at a policy level. The charter also

decreed that patients should not be discriminated against (in the same way that those with a physical disability could not), or be deprived of a pension.

Branching Out – A hostel for men in Guildford. Matilda Gard House (1962)

The first expansion of MHAACFAI beyond North Perth took place in 1962 with the acquisition of a five-acre property on the river in South Guildford for men, through the support of the Lotteries Commission to the tune of £10,000. The property had previously belonged to Dr B.O. Bladen, who was also connected with the Swan Districts Football Club. Upon its acquisition by John Casson he moved in to maintain the property and water the garden, being paid £5.5.0 per week. It then officially was opened as the Matilda Gard Hostel in 1963, to take discharged male patients from Claremont, Heathcote and Nathaniel Harper Homes (small local hostels for intellectually disabled children).

This expansion did not come without complication, particularly in the form of vehement opposition from local residents. “Angry housewives claim that the proposed hostel would ‘poison’ their peace of mind”.¹⁰⁸ (The area was already home to Nathaniel Harper Homes, Nulsen Haven, various aged care homes, Riverbank Reformatory, Bethel Hospital, Pollard Home and Allawah Grove Aboriginal Hostel.) Residents protested vigorously and petitioned that their locale had become a ‘dumping ground’ for institutions. There were also plans to build a 180 bed ‘mental deficiency’ unit in Bassendean at the time, which may have unsettled residents further. However the Swan Guildford Shire Council decided against preventing the hostel being established and upheld the application. By then the Minister for Health was the hon Ross Hutchinson, M.L.A. who warmly opened the building at an official ceremony on Sunday 31st March. Dr W.B.C. Gray who was at the time Superintendent of Havelock Clinic undertook the role of honorary specialist.

Considerable work and was required that had to be paid for beyond the income coming from the residents, so start-up was an expensive time. As the first residents settled in, the organisation got used to now accommodating men, and again the Randall Estate came in handy to help them out with clothing etc. Many residents found themselves things to do around the place to keep busy, and one even travelled to Casson House regularly to help with maintenance there. John Casson was paid £25 per week for his services, to include board and residence and use of a car. Frequently however, work would be carried out by John and others such as Dick, Bert and William Gormley on a volunteer basis over weekends, for example building a copper in the washhouse and creating a vegetable garden. Visitors such as Doc Ellis are reported as being impressed with the hostel, and happy to come by regularly. The Board acknowledged the great success of the hostel, which saw many residents moving back to community life after a period. Men resident at the hostel received only a sickness benefit payment and the running of the hostel was subsidised by Casson House.¹⁰⁹ This cross subsidy of services is something that Casson Homes have continued to do in order to provide the services the Board feel is most in need.

In 1966 a recreation room and staff accommodation was built in the grounds, which went on to become a home for John Casson and his family, where children Mark, Jenny and Nick grew up, and where John and his wife June still live part-time today, now sharing their time between Guildford their home at Giddegannup. The children travelled to John XXIII College to school each day, but remained connected and involved in the life of Casson House and the men in the hostel next door, who became ‘like family’. The original hostel operated

until 1975, when the house was converted to provide needed occupational therapy day activity space for residents of the growing number of psychiatric hostels in metropolitan Perth. This service, staffed by the Department of Psychiatric Services, continued until 1986, when the Government purchased their own property for these services in the area.

The Third Casson: John Takes Over

Matilda Gard Passes (1970)

In 1969 Tilly Gard called Bert Yates to her home and told him that she had six months to live. Her cancer was aggressive, and she died in 1970 aged just 68. She had been awarded an Order of the British Empire (BEM-Civil) for her work for the 'mentally sick' at the beginning of that year, so the timing of the award was fortunate. Newspaper tributes were plenty to the memory of Tilly, who had made a big impression on those in the public and private realm over her life, her remains interred with brother Fred in Karrakatta Rose Gardens. Dick wrote an emotional tribute to her in the minutes of 28th May 1970.

General management was at this time passed over to John Casson, who was by now closely involved with the day to day running of the organization. Assets were valued at \$151k, a healthy credit balance with the bank (after many years of paying of expansion borrowing) and the pride of being 'self-supporting' based on the total of two thirds of the residents' pensions, allowing them to keep one third. Accountant Ian Doig, also a contact from the Swan Districts Football Club took over from Alec Aitken who 'did the books' and was on hand to help John with the finances for many years. Alec's wife Rosie remained as a long-standing Board member. Tilly had also progressed the idea of an aged-care hostel for older residents, which was becoming an urgent problem.

Dick's Day

Dick Gard held the Board Presidency the next twelve years, and as his own building business had also failed around this time, was asked to 'run the office' for many more years by the new manager John Casson (who had stepped down from the Board by this time to take on the management role).

In 1970 an additional property in Woodville Street, North Perth, was purchased for \$14,000 and rebuilt to provide a further 26 beds and staff quarters. With the increased number of beds, some of the rooms in the original house were converted to single occupancy. A total of 89 beds, still only for women, were available in 1970. By 1971 Dick was progressing plans for another building project the form of a new wing at Casson House. He was also acknowledging the changing landscape of mental health care and (as a man who clearly enjoyed to flourish a pen) wrote:



We must be prepared with this expanding development to incorporate as the need arises a more flexibly policy of administration for the welfare of our ladies and for others that will be clamouring for the protection of our care. The modern concept of treatment for the mentally afflicted, the increase in the menace of drug addiction and the psychological adjustments required of an increasing inflation of the social tempo of living, are the ingredients that compel the establishment of amore intense specialised treatment in the future.¹¹⁰

Dick often referred to the impending threat of drug abuse for providers of mental health care, which of course has become a demanding reality in the ensuing years.

By 1972 Dick completed the building of the new wing at Casson House through the assistance of the Lotteries Commission (\$8k, along with continued support recognised from Chairman J. J. Devereaux) which accommodated an extra 27 ladies, and was opened by Mr Ron Davies MLA, now accommodating a total of 112 residents. In 1973 a (unapproved) crossover linking the buildings was erected.

In 1975 the committee approved \$3000 for the purchase of two colour televisions, an electric typewriter and intercom system. Technology was expensive, but made life easier and enjoyable for all. 1976 saw a review of the constitution and suggestion of a name change to Casson Homes.

Office worker Joan Geddes remembers Dick as a true gentleman spending hours poring over old rowing records – administration was never his strength. Richard T. Gard died in 2000, aged 96. It is believed that most of the Casson family records and mementos were lost when Matilda died and were subsequently disposed of by Dick's second wife.

Doctors in the House

Dr Ron Seman, who had become friends with John Casson via their shared membership at the Swan Districts Football Club started visiting patients at Casson House in around 1970 (taking over from Dr Reg Wheeler) and remained the 'house' GP for many years, whilst also running his own practice in Midland. Ron remembers how when he first arrived there were no records kept on any patients, and he set about establishing up a system for recording their condition and treatment (which was to prove useful in later years when his work was investigated). Ron looked after the general health of patients and the administering of medication, such as Largactil (Chlorpromazine) and Mellaril (Thioridazine), under the guidance of Psychiatrists Fitzgerald and then Richard Ellison. Doc Seaman and John Casson had made a five-week trip to England, Norway, Sweden and Holland to study advanced modern methods of treatment including Richmond Fellowship. When Dick Gard went his own way, Ron became a life member and took over the Presidency of MHACCFAL in 1982, a position he held until 2013 when it was passed over to pathologist Dr Quinton Hughes.

Englishman and Psychiatrist Dr Richard Ellison also provided services at Casson House for many years was one of Western Australia's foundation members of the General Council of the newly formed Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists which first met in 1964. Richard was invited to Perth and became Psychiatrist Superintendent at Heathcote Hospital where he worked from 1958 to 1972. From Heathcote Hospital he became Psychiatrist Superintendent at the Community Psychiatry Division until his retirement in 1979. Dr Ellison lived to be 94, dying in 2008. Many leaders of the day in mental health including Dr Arch Ellis (Director of Mental Health Services), Mr H.J. Blackmore (Superintendent Claremont Hospital) and Mr W.L. Rootes, retired Manager of Mental Health Services were also involved at Casson House over the years. Dr Ellis was Director of Mental Health Services in Western Australia from 1963 until his retirement in 1977. During this time, he established a number of new out-patient clinics as well as the Community Psychiatric Division to supervise the registered psychiatric hostels, and the Community Development Centre.¹¹¹

By the 1970s the need for greater degree of transparency and governance was being recognised as required, with correspondence to 'Community Psychiatrist' Dr Ellison from J.

Casson and I. Hamilton noting in 1974 how hostels such as Field House, St Marks and Rosetta Lodge were upon inspection considered 'inferior in standard'. They called for a grading of rest homes and a set of standards published. The increased governance was not without its downside, Ron Seman commented that when funding was introduced in the 1970s, more documentation crept in and more conditions set that required constant monitoring to meet.

More Work for John – The Richmond Fellowship

When John Casson had been to the UK in 1973 to research best practice in mental health after care he had visited the Richmond Fellowship to see the work of Elly Jansen while he was there. John had spent time with Elly in England and offered to host her when she visited Perth, where she came to talk about the concept of therapeutic residential care, with a focus on recovery. John and a group of church affiliated men including George Smith and Barry Hickey set about establishing the Richmond Fellowship in Perth, gathering together support for the idea, and on 8th February 1974 an inaugural meeting was held. They also called on the expertise of Dr Arch Ellis, Dr Richard Ellison, as well as Noreen Paust, the Officer in Charge of the Community Psychiatric Division, (all also involved with Casson House.)

After a rocky start with a lot of resistance from the community the group received donations and money from the Lotteries Commission and acquired their first home in Victoria Park. John used his personal contacts with numerous Perth City Councillors (as the Council incorporated the suburb of Victoria Park at that time) to garner support, having been rejected by Mount Lawley residents earlier. To the credit of the Council, permission was given for a one year trial with an option to extend. The organisation is still operating today under the name of Richmond Wellbeing, providing a suite of mental health residential and community based services in WA.

Throughout these years John Casson poured his remaining energy into a wide range of activities in the world of social service in Perth beyond Casson Homes – Richmond Fellowship, ARAFMI, West Australian Association for Mental Health, Rotary North Perth, to name a few. Without the unfailing support of wife June (who was also busy for some time with her own antiques shop) to support his work and young family, this would not have been possible.

ARAFMI (now Helping Minds) was formed in 1976 and John Casson soon became involved on the committee. The group was an active participant in the swelling 'consumer movement' that was growing around this time, established to support the families of those suffering from mental illness find the best services and support. In 1979 John also became a Justice of the Peace, carrying on the family tradition.

Woodville House (1977)

An existing mental hostel (Leawood Hostel) in Helena Valley was under threat of closure due to death of the owner, at which point the then Community Psychiatric Department (via Maureen Paust and Dick Ellison) approached the Committee and asked if they would take it on. After managing the facility for a while the Committee decided to purchase it in 1977 for \$100k from internal resources and named it "Woodville House" to provide accommodation for 25 men and women, in a pleasant rural setting (which appeals more than the inner city to some residents) as an approved psychiatric hostel. In 2016 a refurbishment programme began which delivered much needed additional space and modernisation.

St Rita's – a Home for Life (1979)

By this time Casson House had been operating for some fifty years. The common problem perpetually faced by management was finding suitable accommodation for residents once they became geriatric and in need of high-level care, that was sensitive to their needs. It was therefore decided that MHACCFAI needed to establish its own 'C-class' hospital. Again the Lotteries Commission came to the rescue with a grant of \$80,000 and an existing nursing home in Queen's Crescent, St Rita's, was purchased on 1st February 1979 to house 27 patients in their old age. They had also secured Commonwealth Funding that was available for aged care providers (but not mental health) by this time. The heritage building contained a stunning wooden staircase that was deemed a 'fire hazard' and a directive issued for it to be removed. The Committee managed to avoid ever having to remove the staircase by placating authorities that the facility was 'temporary' while planning and saving to build a new home. Patients began to be transferred from Casson House to St Rita's, hence the continuum of care that had been a dream for many years was realised.

1979 was also the year that Green Place in Mosman Park was closed (the land sold for private development). Psychiatric nurse at Casson House for many years, Liz Chase, remembers many of the patients being transferred to Casson House at that time, minutes note that 12 women (as well as Teddy the dog) arrived at Casson House from Green Place at this time, at which time the heritage site was sold by the government of the day to builder and developer John Roberts who demolished the buildings. With the ladies came a mobile 'bottling department' which involved sticking labels on bottles and placing them in plastic bags. Dr Fitzgerald also retired this year due to ill health.

Expansion (1980s)

By the time Joan Geddes joined the Casson team in 1980, there was a growing team of staff required to keep things running smoothly. The culture of institutional care was also beginning to shift, and residents became less likely to help out with domestic and maintenance work. For many years Beryl Dunn took pride in setting the tables, and others took charge of the laundry. One resident kept the boiler charged with fuel, sometimes feeding it with long lengths of wood, pushed in further as it burnt.

After Dick Gard had left in the early 1980s, Peter Armstrong had stepped in as general manager. Peter's wife Dawn became a patient at St Rita's when she suffered and later died from early-onset Alzheimer's disease. Joan worked with Peter and Liz Hughes, and later employed Beryl King in 1982 and together they looked after wages and pocket money disbursement for the residents, often going shopping locally to buy their cigarettes and confectionary. Joan and Beryl would also be responsible for administering medication at times, and remember standing at the top of the corridor and shouting "tablets" to get the job done. Beryl was a heavy smoker, as were many staff at the time, and Joan recalls the office in a constant cloud of cigarette smoke. Both Beryl and Joan remember these days with great fondness and how the atmosphere was always one of a large family, and both still help out with board representation and doing volunteer work, to this day.

A file note of the time lists activities (organised by Chris Mills) as follows: swimming at Carine Glades and Beatty Park, horse riding, ten pin bowling, podiatry clinic, dental clinic, eye clinic, socials at Casson House and Shenton Park, drives for Devon teas, visits to the Swan

Brewery, French Navy Flag Ship, Cohunu Wild Life Park, Kelmscott Farm School, Royal Show, El Caballo Blanco, Mills and Wares Biscuits, Egg Marketing Board, Cinema, Circus, to name a few. The annual river cruise was still a popular event at this time, with the *SS Perth* collecting Graylands patients from Claremont Jetty before heading to Keane's Point for a picnic.

In 1981 the decision was made to purchase a holiday house in Dawesville for \$52k, where groups of residents and staff could go for a change of scene. John and Bert did their best to convert the simple existing home 'on poles' but the design was not ideal, being over two floors. The home was kept for approximately twenty years, until it was sold in order to contribute to the building of the new St Rita's Nursing Home in the late 1990s.

Fresh horses and a new name – Casson Homes Inc. (1980s)

In July 1983 Richard Gard retired and married an ex nurse from Casson House. At this point he became estranged from the Cassons due to differences of opinion over financial compensation. Dick had been given a 'dinghy and outboard', which he believed was a gesture preceding a payout for his time with the organisation, however as a charitable institution this was not to be the case. House Doctor Ron Seman was elected as the new President, of an organisation that now had assets in excess of \$1m and an annual wages bill of \$500k, ably administered by secretary Ian Doig.

The decision was made by the Board to change the name to get rid of the word 'mental' in 1984. Casson Homes Incorporated was now the collective name for the growing group of facilities and services, which today operates under the *Association Incorporation Act 2015*. In 1984 a "Brief History of Casson Homes" was produced, along with a constitutional booklet.

1984 was also the year that the organisation entered into an agreement with the Commonwealth Government for both Casson House and Woodville House to receive Commonwealth subsidy. Many mentions appear in the minutes of changes and additions to the buildings to 'comply with Commonwealth regulations' such as bell systems, toilets etc. Another building at 5 Woodville Street was also purchased for \$85k and then set up as a supervised share home.

In 1987 Swanbourne Hospital was finally closed, given that the community model for housing long-term mental health patients was now in full swing and many had been located to the suburbs. John Casson and social worker Shirley Smith first met with Superintendent Dr Harry Blackmore in 1983 to discuss the need for supported housing for people who did not need to be hospitalised but required some help with meals and caretaking, ideal in inner city location. Being grounded in the heart of inner-city North Perth has always been a driving success characteristic for Casson Homes, in the Committee's view; with transport, shopping and other services on the doorstep. By this time the concept of 'cluster homes' had begun to be rolled out, however these were inevitably being located in outer suburban locations, often with limited facilities and poor opportunity for community connection.

A lot like his grandmother Susan, John Casson had developed a knack for attracting and gathering a wide and impressive range of participants to help keep Casson Homes stable (and financially healthy). Vice Presidents are Margie Ross, with her wealth of experience, and Mrs Monica Cooke. Monica was the wife of Labor Commonwealth Senator Joseph Cooke (1904-1981), who interestingly had as a younger man been general president and secretary of the Railway Officers' Union and always championed the cause of marginalised people, including the

unemployed and the mentally and physically disabled¹¹². Daughter Sister Patrice Cooke was at the time breaking ground on research and the delivery of services for adolescent delinquents. Additional committee members are I. Doig, W. & I. Gormley, K. Ross, L. Smith, B. Yates and J. Boelen.

Trustees by this time are Mrs B. Beecroft MBE JP, Dr F. Bell, Chas Hopkins and Peter Lalor. Liberal party member Bertha Beecroft (1906-1996) was another stalwart of the Perth community: a councillor with the City of Perth for thirty years, appointed the first woman chair of the Lotteries Commission in 1975, on the Board of Visitors of Claremont Hospital and Heathcote and a Board member of the Deaf School (not to mention a keen hockey and opera fan)¹¹³ – hence was a perfect match for Casson Homes. Charles Hopkins, with his handy connection to local government (being Lord Mayor of Perth 1988-91) and strong Labor roots was also a great fit (in 1985 the Association took over the license run Collville Nursing Home from Mr Hopkins). Peter Lalor also joined, a well-known Perth business identity of the day, establishing the (initially) very successful Sons of Gwalia gold mining company in 1981 with his brother Chris. Maybe Peter's genealogical links to the Eureka Stockade's leader of the same name instilled in him a desire to fight for democracy and the voice of the underprivileged.

John Casson and Ron Seman undertook another European fact finding trip and attendance at a conference in Copenhagen. They returned sharing the global trends that were taking place at this time towards independent living, the growth of anxiety as a disorder, the impact of broken homes and drug addiction on mental health. John and Ron attended the World Psychiatric Symposium in Sydney in May 1988 and New Zealand in 1989, keeping abreast of developments in the field.

In 1987 another house at View Street was purchased, which paved the way for a significant landholding in the area that would then allow for the development of the new St Ritas. Demolition of 23 View Street quietly took place in 1989. 55 View Street (Aitkin House) was purchased in 1989 adding to the group home portfolio. Planning for the future was firmly underway, however a trial towards computerised accounts at the time was not successful and a reversion to the original book system took place. Some things were best left as they were, for the time being.

Consolidation and the Growth of Group Homes (1990s)

1990 was the year that John Casson decided it was time for him to bow out of Richmond Fellowship and resigned from their Board after fifteen years of honorary involvement, and was subsequently awarded life membership in recognition for his significant contribution and made Patron. John had also been involved with organisations such as ARAFMI, Grow, Yardstick and Schizophrenia foundation so had plenty to keep him busy.

By now the provision of community group homes made up another significant part of the organisation. Homes at 9 Woodville Street (Monica house), 45 Leake Street (Ross House) and 25 Leake Street (Gormley House) were providing transitional housing for both men, women and some families. Martin McAteer had taken over the management of the group homes and two additional homes were purchased in North Perth in 1993, one of these homes specifically for younger people with more acute illness and thus harder to place, to be a joint venture with Eastern region Community Rehabilitation Team. The old chapel in Woodville Street was also purchased around this time when it was deconsecrated and came on to the market, but then

sold in 2001. The printer's premises on the corner of Woodville Street and Angove Street was purchased in 1996 and while for a time proposed as a home for ATUL, was then rented out, and as a sound rental investment remains part of the property portfolio today. By 1998 group assets are in excess of \$5m.

In 1998 Dr Seman, Dr Kostov (who had taken over from Dr Ellison), podiatrist and hairdresser are all visiting regularly. Some years later in 2004 Ron Seman was investigated by the Health Insurance Commission for over-servicing, as well as prescribing too much pathology and pharmacy (given the raft of secondary health conditions suffered by residents) but was subsequently cleared of the allegations due to the diligent record keeping he had put in place years before. Peter Armstrong was running the office by the late 1990s and governance was on the agenda. Groups were established to develop policies to meet standards for accreditation of Casson House and St Rita's with the Standards Agency. This involved the production of manuals, detailed job descriptions, audits on operations and a residential satisfaction survey. A quality management plan was developed.

An Honest Day's Work – ATUL & PD Leading Enterprises (1980s)

By 1981 John Casson had joined the board of Aid to Useful Living (ATUL), which had been set up in the early 1960s as a registered charity and has been supported by donations (government and NFP), initially operating out of Graylands Hospital's Industrial Rehabilitation site. John soon became Chair. The PD Leading Enterprises (PDLE) development programme was established in 1995 for those with mental health issues, providing personal and work recovery and useful living skills and apposite place to go each day. In 1998 John became the President of PDLE, clearly recognising the value of a working day in the lives of the mentally ill, who participated in range of processing and assembly tasks for numerous local industries. Many residents from Casson House and other hostels all over Perth benefited from therapeutic benefits of participating in the working world through PDLE.

Operated from premise in Victoria Park it was to run successfully until closure in 2016 (although ATUL continues to exist) due to the withdrawal of Mental Health Commission funding, necessary to provide suitable staff for employment management. John Casson was associated with ATUL and PDLE for 46 years, and strongly laments the loss of the service for people in his community.

An Organisation for the Millennium (2000)

New St Rita's

In 2000 planning begun in earnest to relocate and rebuild St Rita's Nursing Home to provide a home for high-care existing residents and 20 new residents with geriatric specialist needs from the local community. Susan Casson's old home at 25 View Street, which had been repurchased and named Gormley House and used as a group home in the meantime, was to become the entrance and historic basis of the new state-of-the-art facility. A vacant block on the corner of View and Leake Streets, and another deceased estate adjoining were also purchased to create a 'super-block' suitable to build the new facility.

In true Casson style, materials such as bricks from the demolished buildings were saved and recycled where possible, ensuring 'every post was a winner'. The financial resources required to plan, build and open the home were all sourced from the sale of internal assets (including the Chapel on Woodville Street and the old St Rita's in Queens Crescent that was purchased by Perth College for \$1.35m with a year of free rent) and the building project progressed, at a cost of c. \$3m. In November 2002 the facility was officially opened, completely unencumbered of capital borrowing. St Rita's houses eight low care residents and 39 high care places which includes two CAP beds that are managed by Royal Perth Hospital. For long-term residents such as Betty Pleydelle aged 88 who has been at Casson House for 54 years, St Rita's will be the natural place for her to choose to go when she needs a bit more day to day support.

Nick – The Fourth Casson

In 2001 Peter Armstrong became suddenly ill, and Nick Casson stepped in to take over his duties as Administrator. By now total annual income of the organisation was around \$4.5m – with \$2.7m from Commonwealth subsidies, \$241k from State subsidies and \$959k in fees. Long-standing secretary Ian Doig also passed away in 2001, who had been serving Casson Homes right up until his death at the age of 74. 'Doigie' had suffered a stroke some years earlier which combined with other ailments rendered him wheelchair bound, however this did not stop him coming to Casson House to continue with his duties. John Casson continues to remain on hand and busy with a range of supporting work, being nominated as a finalist for Senior Australian of the Year Awards in 2005.

Responding to changing demands also saw the decision made around 2007 to organise the last of the historical 'river cruises' that the MHACCFall and then Casson Homes had coordinated for the patients and staff of Claremont and then Graylands and other mental hospitals. The sports day held annually at Graylands was also discontinued. Participation in the events had been gradually dwindling, and donations to the 'Christmas Cheer' fund that was established at a time when funding for mental health was minimal and support depended on the generosity of community donors. (Legacy funding from benefactors such as WRV Randall however continues to make a small contribution to after care support for inpatients and those discharged from hospital, at the discretion of the Casson Homes Board.) Increased involvement by government bodies also placed limitations on the running of events such as these, and organisers felt that they were compromised with regulations, particularly around issues such as smoking.

Nick took over the running of Casson Homes with confidence and has overseen many further acquisitions, upgrades and renovations which have kept the operations and assets in a

healthy state. Staying true to the values of Casson Homes, to diversify services to meet the most pressing demands identified, the decision was made in 2014 to purchase an ex hostel named Rosedale Lodge in Guildford with the support of Lotterywest, and its renovation and remodelling to provide short-medium accommodation for women and children at risk, and to be known as Matilda Gard Services.

Centenary Approaches

In 2022 Casson Homes will celebrate 100 years of providing secure and quality residential and community services to people with mental health and other social challenges. Throughout its history, across four generations of leaders, the organisation has always followed its own path to meet the needs of those identified as being the most vulnerable within the community of Perth. A combination of genuine compassion, social vision, shrewd investment and humour has earned the wide respect of the mental health services sector in Perth.

And that takes a long time to achieve.

Index

A

Aid to Useful Living · 62
Amalgamated Society of Railway Employees, WA · 20
ARAFMI · 58
Ardagh, Maria · 7, 24
Armstrong, Peter · 59, 62, 63
Australian Hotel · 16
Australian Labor Federation · 23, 26

B

Beadle, Jean · 22, 24, 26
Beecroft, Bertha · 61
Bentley, Dr · 33, 35, 45, 51, 52
Birmingham, Dr · 30, 33
Blackmore, Dr H. · 53, 60
Boans Brothers · 24, 28
Board of Visitors · 29, 32, 34, 42, 48
Breydon, Mrs E. · 38, 46
British Trident · 9
Bute Private Hospital · 36

C

Cardell-Oliver, Florence · 47
Casson House · 41
Casson, Bill · 11, 19
Casson, Fred · 11, 20, 42
Casson, Jack · 17
Casson, Jack · 11
Casson, John · 5, 21, 52, 55, 63
Casson, John (Snr b.1839) · 9
Casson, Matilda · 33
Casson, Nick · 63
Casson, Susan · 11, 17, 22, 31, 48
Casson, Ted · 9, 11, 16
Chase, Liz · 59
Children's Court · 25, 34, 38
Christmas Cheer · 32, 34, 42, 44, 63
Civil Service Association Council · 20
Civilian Maimed and Limbless Association · 47
Claremont Hospital · 23, 25, 29, 31, 33, 40, 46, 49, 51, 53
Clothing Trades Union and Typographic Union · 27
Collier, Phillip · 34
Conscription · 24
Cooke, Monica · 61
Cowan, Edith · 24, 31

D

Daglish, Henry · 14
Darbyshire, Mr · 42
Davies, Ron · 57
Dawesville Holiday House · 60
Deinstitutionalisation · 53
Dodd, Jabez · 33

Dodd, Mrs · 34, 37, 41
Doig, Ian · 56, 60, 63
Dunn, Beryl · 59

E

Eccles, Fanny · 26, 39
Eight Hour Day · 24
Ellis, Dr A. · 57
Ellison, Dr R. · 57, 58

F

Federated Engine Drivers Union · 38
Fisher, Andrew · 24
Fitzgerald, Dr · 52, 59
Fremantle Eight Hour Committee · 15
Frew, Jean · 20, 21
Frew, William & Flora · 20
Fry, Alice (nee) · 17

G

Gard, Dick · 18, 42, 44, 45, 49, 56, 60
Gard, Matilda · 11, 18, 51, 56
Geashill · 7
Geddes, Joan · 59
Goldfields Typo Union · 27
Gormley, Mrs · 52
Government Printing Office · 20
Gray, Dr W. · 54
Graylands Day Hospital · 46
Green, Matron · 39
Green Place · 29, 33, 53, 59

H

Havelock Clinic · 46
Heathcote Hospital · 33, 40, 48
Hickey, Barry · 58
Holman, May · 24, 27
Holmes, William · 7, 24
Hopkins, Charles · 61
Hospitality Union · 38
Hotel and Restaurant Employees Union · 39
Hughes, Dr Q. · 57
Hutchinson, Ross · 54
Hutchison, Ruby · 24

J

James, Walter · 13, 14
Jeffries, Matilda (nee) · 9
John Scaddan · 23

K

Keough, Ma · 38
Keough, Mrs F. · 38, 49
Keough's Hall · 20, 38, 50
King, Beryl · 59
Kostov, Dr S. · 62

L

Labor Queen · 27
Labor Women's Conference · 23
Labor Women's Organisation · 22
Labor Women's Social Club · 23
Lalor, Peter · 61
Leawood Hostel · 58
Lotteries Commission · 35, 49, 51, 57, 59, 61
Lotterywest · 64
lumpers strike · 11

M

MacCallum, James · 50
Matilda Gard Hostel · 54
Matilda Gard Services · 64
McAteer, Martin · 62
McWhae, Dr · 30, 35
Melbourne Orphan Asylum · 8
Mental Health Act 1962 · 53
Mental Health Commission · 62
Mental Treatment Act 1927 · 33
Metropolitan Female Printing Employees Union · 27
Mincham, Mrs E. · 50
Mitchell, Sir James · 35, 44
Mogumber Mission · 50
Montgomery, Dr · 29
Moss, Dr K. · 32, 39, 42
Moynagh, Dr D. · 46

N

Nathanial Harper Home · 52
National Council of Women · 24, 31
Needham, Mr E. · 39
Noble, Mrs · 46
Noble, Mrs J. · 39, 44
Nulsen, E. · 52

P

Padbury, Walter · 33
Paust, Noreen · 58
PD Leading Enterprises · 62
Perth Bridge Club · 40
Perth College · 63
Pioneer Women's Appeal · 52
Plaistowes · 42
Pleydelle, Betty · 63
Printing Industry Employees Union of Australia · 27

R

Railway Employees Conference · 12
Railway Institute · 22
Randall, Mr WRV · 50
Rapley, Mrs A. · 38
Richardson, William · 9
Richmond Fellowship · 58, 61
Rischbieth, Bessie · 24
river cruise · 42, 44, 60, 63
Rosedale Lodge · 64
Ross, Matron · 45, 49, 51
Rotary North Perth · 58
Rottnest Island · 38
Royal Commission 1921 · 30
Royal Commission, 1938 · 40
Royal Visit · 50

S

Scaddan, John · 14, 22, 35
Sears, Percy · 50
Seman, Dr R. · 57, 61
Settle, Matron · 45
Shawcross, Matron · 40
Shelley, Cecile · 38
Smith, George · 58
Smith, Shirley · 60
SS Aconcagua · 9
SS Clifton · 7
SS Pelican · 20
SS Perth · 33, 60
SS Zepher · 33
St Rita's · 59
St Rita's Nursing Home · 61, 63
States Grants (Mental Health Institutions) Act · 54
Stoller Report · 46
Swan Rowing Club · 19
Swanbourne Hospital · 60

T

Thompson, Mr E. · 48
Trades Hall · 12, 23
Trotting Association · 34
Turf Club · 33

U

Ugly Men · 33, 34
United Furniture Trades Union · 27
University of Western Australia · 53

V

Veitch, Jack · 19
Veitch, John · 9
Veitch, Louie (nee Casson, Dunn) · 10

W

WA Trotting Association · 31
WAGR · 11
Weir, Mr J. · 30, 45
West Australian Amalgamated Society of Railway
Employees Union of Workers · 11
West Australian Organisation of Labor Women · 26
Whitby Falls · 29, 33, 53
White City Uglieland · 34
Wills & Michelides · 42
Women Justices Association of Western Australia · 26

Women's Justices Association · 38
Women's Labor League · 22, 39
Women's Peace Movement · 38
Women's Political and Social Crusade (WPSC) · 22
Women's Service Guild · 24, 29
Woodville Estate · 36
Woodville House · 59

Y

Yates, Bert · 49, 52

Endnotes

- ¹ Image: MRS. A. CASSON, J.P. (1924, December 24). *Call* (Perth, WA : 1920 - 1927), p. 1. Retrieved June 27, 2017, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article213728050>
- ² IRISH SETTLEMENT IN LOGAN IN THE 19TH CENTURY - THE 'ERIN-GO-BRAGH' AND THE QUEENSLAND IMMIGRATION SOCIETY. Logan City Council, Local Studies Handout 10. 2010. Retrieved 21 April 2017. http://www.logan.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0010/74746/6558450-Handout10-Irish-Settlement-Logan.pdf
- ³ Public Record Office of Victoria, Index to Unassisted Inward Passenger Lists to Victoria 1852-1923. http://prov.vic.gov.au/search_results?searchid=23&format=freetext&FamilyName=Holmes&GivenName=&Ship=Clifton&Month=0&Monthto=0&Year=0&Yearto=0&SearchSortField1=&SearchSortField2=&SearchRecords=50&x=27&y=17. Accessed 12 September 2016.
- ⁴ Of the M.E. Watson of Liverpool
- ⁵ Family Notices (1892, February 6). *Leader* (Melbourne, Vic. : 1862 - 1918), p. 45. Retrieved September 21, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article197978515>
- ⁶ The late 1890s saw a massive migration of people from Victoria to Western Australia (which increased from 48,000 to 180,000 during the 1890s⁶), many seeking employment and fortune in the Kalgoorlie goldfields after the banking crisis and housing crash of 1893.
- ⁷ Family Notices (1939, December 23). *The West Australian* (Perth, WA : 1879 - 1954), p. 1. Retrieved September 20, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article46345233>
- ⁸ 1938 'PERSONAL.', *The West Australian* (Perth, WA : 1879 - 1954), 27 December, p. 6. , viewed 20 Sep 2016, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article46287576>
- ⁹ <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Latestproducts/3302.0Main%20Features52014?opendocument&tabname=Summary&prodno=3302.0&issue=2014&num=&view=>
- ¹⁰ Although the movement was often referred to as that of 'Labor', for matters of consistency the use of 'Labour' is used throughout.
- ¹¹ A SAD END. (1909, June 12). *Truth* (Perth, WA : 1903 - 1931), p. 5 (CITY EDITION). Retrieved December 1, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article207401628>
- ¹² OUR PERTH LETTER. (1902, November 14). *Westralian Worker* (Perth, WA : 1900 - 1951), p. 2. Retrieved October 5, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article148326153>
- ¹³ THE W.A.G. RAILWAY ASSOCIATION. (1902, December 27). *Western Mail* (Perth, WA : 1885 - 1954), p. 8. Retrieved September 28, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article37542189>
- ¹⁴ Layman, L., Goddard, Julian, Wise, Wendy, Ho, Robin, & Trades Labor Council of Western Australia. (1988). *Organise! : A visual record of the Labor movement in Western Australia*. East Perth, W.A: Trades and Labor Council of W.A.
- ¹⁵ TED CASSON. (1903, April 17). *Westralian Worker* (Perth, WA : 1900 - 1951), p. 2. Retrieved September 27, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article148326948>
- ¹⁶ RAILWAY EMPLOYEES' CONFERENCE. (1905, October 28). *Western Mail* (Perth, WA : 1885 - 1954), p. 33. Retrieved December 1, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article37808310>
- ¹⁷ STATE ELECTIONS. (1904, May 26). *The West Australian* (Perth, WA : 1879 - 1954), p. 9. Retrieved September 27, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article25089350>
- ¹⁸ E. H. J. CASSON (1906, June 9). *Truth* (Perth, WA : 1903 - 1931), p. 4 (CITY EDITION). Retrieved September 27, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article207395419>
- ¹⁹ DON'T KNOW THEIR OWN MIND. (1904, September 23). *Westralian Worker* (Perth, WA : 1900 - 1951), p. 6. Retrieved September 28, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article149606911>
- ²⁰ LABOUR'S ELECT. (1904, May 28). *Truth* (Perth, WA : 1903 - 1931), p. 3 (CITY EDITION : SUPPLEMENT). Retrieved September 27, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article207387225>
- ²¹ METROPOLITAN AND FREMANTLE. (1904, July 2). *Western Mail* (Perth, WA : 1885 - 1954), p. 15. Retrieved September 28, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article38683913>
- ²² Thomas, T. (1905). *Through the Spy-Glass: Short Sketches of Well-known Westralians as Others See Them*. Praagh & Lloyd.
- ²³ SENATE SELECTION BALLOT. (1906, June 3). *The Sun* (Kalgoorlie, WA : 1898 - 1919), p. 9. Retrieved September 28, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article211738738>
- ²⁴ "THE HUMBUG OF THE ANTI-GAMBLING CRUSADE." (1907, October 26). *Western Mail* (Perth, WA : 1885 - 1954), p. 50. Retrieved September 28, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article37572036>
- ²⁵ MR. CASSON'S DEATH (1909, June 9). *The Daily News* (Perth, WA : 1882 - 1950), p. 4. Retrieved September 28, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article77104663>

- ²⁶ A SAD END. (1909, June 12). *Truth (Perth, WA : 1903 - 1931)*, p. 5 (CITY EDITION). Retrieved December 1, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article207401628>
- ²⁷ Image: A SAD END. (1909, June 12). *Truth (Perth, WA : 1903 - 1931)*, p. 5 (CITY EDITION). Retrieved December 1, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article207401628>
- ²⁸ The War Day by Day AND AN INCIDENTAL REVIEW OF THE OPERATIONS (1918, April 7). *Sunday Times (Perth, WA : 1902 - 1954)*, p. 13. Retrieved December 1, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article57991836>
- ²⁹ Three and Two Make Five (1932, May 22). *Sunday Times (Perth, WA : 1902 - 1954)*, p. 6 (Second Section). Retrieved November 16, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article58663426>
- ³⁰ Family Notices (1932, July 21). *The West Australian (Perth, WA : 1879 - 1954)*, p. 1. Retrieved September 27, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article32534925>
- ³¹ Y.W.C.A. TRAINING. (1946, January 31). *The West Australian (Perth, WA : 1879 - 1954)*, p. 9. Retrieved November 16, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article50323243>
- ³² MARRIED YESTERDAY (1949, October 27). *The West Australian (Perth, WA : 1879 - 1954)*, p. 28. Retrieved December 1, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article47679315>
- ³³ Image: SPECIAL PLANE TRIP (1953, June 1). *The West Australian (Perth, WA : 1879 - 1954)*, p. 19. Retrieved December 1, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article55807452>
- ³⁴ Daily News 18 November 1936 p.10.
- ³⁵ KING'S CUP RACE. (1935, May 13). *The West Australian (Perth, WA : 1879 - 1954)*, p. 17. Retrieved September 26, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article32859779>
- ³⁶ "Surprise Party" for Secretary. (1937, October 11). *The West Australian (Perth, WA : 1879 - 1954)*, p. 4. Retrieved September 26, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article41438273>
- ³⁷ ENTERTAIN AT REGATTA (1948, May 16). *Sunday Times (Perth, WA : 1902 - 1954)*, p. 9 (The Sunday Times Sporting Section). Retrieved September 26, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article59480744>
- ³⁸ Family Notices (1930, October 19). *Sunday Times (Perth, WA : 1902 - 1954)*, p. 29. Retrieved September 29, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article58401256>
- ³⁹ Image: SWAN RIVER ROWING CLUB REGATTA. (1928, May 14). *The West Australian (Perth, WA : 1879 - 1954)*, p. 16. Retrieved December 1, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article32111242>
- ⁴⁰ Image: State Library of Western Australia. <http://www.slwa.wa.gov.au/images/women/007369d.jpg>
- ⁴¹ Oliver, B. (2007). *Jean Beadle : a life of Labor activism*. Crawley, W.A.: UWA Press.
- ⁴² ABS HISTORY OF PENSIONS AND OTHER BENEFITS IN AUSTRALIA, 1301.0 - Year Book Australia, 1988. Accessed 2 October 2016.
- ⁴³ Oppenheimer, M. (2001). 'We All Did Voluntary Work of Some Kind': Voluntary Work and Labor History. *Labor history*, 1-11.
- ⁴⁴ ALF, originally the Trades & Labor Council, Perth from 1891, a peak trade union body that had re-emerged with its new name in 1907
- ⁴⁵ WOMAN: And her Work. (1911, May 13). *Truth (Perth, WA : 1903 - 1931)*, p. 9 (CITY EDITION). Retrieved October 5, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article211803432>
- ⁴⁶ Oliver, B. (2001). 'In the Thick of Every Battle for the Cause of Labour': The Voluntary Work of the Labor Women's Organisations in Western Australia, 1900-70. *Labor History*, 93-108.
- ⁴⁷ Women's Leagues. (1912, July 5). *Westralian Worker (Perth, WA : 1900 - 1951)*, p. 5. Retrieved October 4, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article149832961>
- ⁴⁸ The couple lived previously at 70 Lindsay Street in North Perth, and later 20 Blencowe Street in West Leederville.
- ⁴⁹ EMBEZZLEMENT CHARGE (1917, October 31). *The Daily News (Perth, WA : 1882 - 1950)*, p. 6. Retrieved October 6, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article81821038>
- ⁵⁰ Ozich, C. (1999). 'The great bond of motherhood': maternal citizenship and Perth feminists in the 1920s. [Women and Citizenship: Suffrage Centenary edited by Crawford, Patricia and Skene, Judy.]. *Studies in Western Australian History*, (19), 127.
- ⁵¹ WOMEN'S SERVICE GUILD. (1915, April 16). *Western Mail (Perth, WA : 1885 - 1954)*, p. 42. Retrieved October 12, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article37424338>
- ⁵² Oliver, 2007, citing circular to Woman's Organiser Committee and reports by Mrs Casson.
- ⁵³ B. Oliver, 2001.
- ⁵⁴ CLEOPATRA'S NEEDLES (1915, June 18). *Westralian Worker (Perth, WA : 1900 - 1951)*, p. 3. Retrieved October 5, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article148348577>
- ⁵⁵ B. Oliver, 2007.
- ⁵⁶ The Daily News PERTH. WESTERN AUSTRALIA. TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 1920. (1920, February 3). *The Daily News (Perth, WA : 1882 - 1950)*, p. 4 (THIRD EDITION). Retrieved October 6, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article84045247>

- ⁵⁷ CONTROL OF A COURT (1929, October 18). *The Daily News (Perth, WA : 1882 - 1950)*, p. 2 (HOME FINAL EDITION). Retrieved October 6, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article85137780>
- ⁵⁸ Roe, J. (1986). *Beyond belief: theosophy in Australia, 1879-1939* (Vol. 3). UNSW Press.
- ⁵⁹ B. Oliver, 2001.
- ⁶⁰ CLEOPATRA'S NEEDLES. (1917, January 19). *Westralian Worker (Perth, WA : 1900 - 1951)*, p. 2. Retrieved October 5, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article148293193>
- ⁶¹ Organisation of Women (1917, February 2). *Westralian Worker (Perth, WA : 1900 - 1951)*, p. 5. Retrieved October 5, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article148293346>
- ⁶² Oliver, B. (2007). Jean Beadle: A life of Labour activism.
- ⁶³ WOMAN ORGANISER RETIRES. (1918, January 25). *Westralian Worker (Perth, WA : 1900 - 1951)*, p. 2. Retrieved October 5, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article148242999>
- ⁶⁴ DPRIDE OF THE MORNING (1918, March 15). *Westralian Worker (Perth, WA : 1900 - 1951)*, p. 2. Retrieved October 5, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article148243610>
- ⁶⁵ CLEOPATRA'S NEEDLES. (1916, January 21). *Westralian Worker (Perth, WA : 1900 - 1951)*, p. 7. Retrieved October 5, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article148341893>
- ⁶⁶ LUNACY REGULATIONS (1914, December 18). *The Daily News (Perth, WA : 1882 - 1950)*, p. 10 (THIRD EDITION). Retrieved October 12, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article79908833>
- ⁶⁷ *Eloquent Testimony: The Story of the Mental Health Services in Western Australia, 1830-1975*. Nedlands, WA: University of Western Australia Press; Beaverton, Or., USA: International Specialized Book Services, 1984.
- ⁶⁸ PERSONAL. (1915, May 15). *The West Australian (Perth, WA : 1879 - 1954)*, p. 8. Retrieved October 12, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article26942235>
- ⁶⁹ "ALWAYS RUN DOWN" (1921, December 21). *The Daily News (Perth, WA : 1882 - 1950)*, p. 8 (THIRD EDITION). Retrieved October 12, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article83109979>
- ⁷⁰ AMENDED LUNACY ACT (1921, February 22). *Western Argus (Kalgoorlie, WA : 1916 - 1938)*, p. 20. Retrieved October 6, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article34244098>
- ⁷¹ NEWS AND NOTES. (1919, December 19). *The West Australian (Perth, WA : 1879 - 1954)*, p. 6. Retrieved October 6, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article27670978>
- ⁷² HOSPITAL FOR INSANE (1922, November 25). *The Daily News (Perth, WA : 1882 - 1950)*, p. 4. Retrieved October 13, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article83264046>
- ⁷³ NEWS AND NOTES. (1921, June 2). *The West Australian (Perth, WA : 1879 - 1954)*, p. 6. Retrieved October 15, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article27965430>
- ⁷⁴ It is interesting to note that in August 1921 a 'West Australian Lunacy Reform Society' was formed by a group of trustees, Walter Edmund Courthope, John Beecham (of the YMCA), and Harry Griffiths to fight Inspector Anderson's 'ivory skulled administration'. "As it is the intention of the society to closely watch the interests of the patients before the Royal Commission on Lunacy Administration all persons prepared to give evidence on oath concerning same are requested to promptly communicate with the Secretary of the Society."⁷⁴ It's hard to tell what happened to this splinter group that was shadowing the work of the MHACCFAI, spearheaded by Beecham, which advertised its existence heavily and sponsored one public talk, but then appears to have evaporated.
- ⁷⁵ Mental Health Comfort Fund Minute Book, 1922-1932, supplied by John Casson, held in the offices of Casson Homes.
- ⁷⁶ A file note states that a letter had been received from the Colonial Secretary stating it would be necessary for the Association to be an After Care Association for Lunacy Patients. The name of the association is however then changed to the Mental Health After Care and Comforts Fund Association.
- ⁷⁷ HOSPITAL FOR THE INSANE. (1925, May 2). *The West Australian (Perth, WA : 1879 - 1954)*, p. 15. Retrieved October 15, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article31293624>
- ⁷⁸ *Report of the Inspector General of the Insane, 1929*, cited by Martyr, P. (2011). Having a Clean Up? Deporting Lunatic Migrants from Western Australia, 1924-1939. *History Compass*, 9(3), 171-199.
- ⁷⁹ P. Martyr, 2013.
- ⁸⁰ MCACCA, Meeting Minutes 23rd March 1931
- ⁸¹ For an account of the Ugly Men and their work, see Farrell, R. (1993). *A history of the Ugly Men's Voluntary Worker's* (Doctoral dissertation, Murdoch University).
- ⁸² WHITE CITY. (1927, November 29). *The West Australian (Perth, WA : 1879 - 1954)*, p. 14. Retrieved October 17, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article32068177>
- ⁸³ Supski, S. D. (2009). *A Proper Foundation: A History of the Lotteries Commission of Western Australia 1932-2008*. Black Swan Press.
- ⁸⁴ MENTAL CASES' AFTER-CARE (1933, September 20). *The Daily News (Perth, WA : 1882 - 1950)*, p. 5 (LATE CITY). Retrieved October 17, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article82918051>

- ⁸⁵ Certificate of Title Vol 713, Folio 37, Lots 26 and part Lot 27 on Plan 2028
- ⁸⁶ WA Heritage Council (City of Vincent) 'Casson House'.
<http://inherit.stateheritage.wa.gov.au/Public/Inventory/Details/eedfb4af-5282-40f3-9a28-e0e128730f44>, accessed 17 October 2017.
- ⁸⁷ See Bolton, G. C. (Geoffrey Curgenvin) (1997). *Daphne Street*. Fremantle Arts Centre Press, Fremantle, W.A, for a summary of the history of the area.
- ⁸⁸ SECRETARY'S INTRUSION. (1931, December 23). *The West Australian* (Perth, WA : 1879 - 1954), p. 22. Retrieved October 18, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article32384026>
- ⁸⁹ DIVIDED OPINION. (1939, June 8). *The West Australian* (Perth, WA : 1879 - 1954), p. 7. Retrieved October 17, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article46397844>
- ⁹⁰ Mental Health After Care Comforts Fund Association Incorporated AGM 5th September 1945, minutes.
- ⁹¹ "Worried Over Health, Suicides" *The Daily News* (Perth, WA : 1882 - 1950) 22 March 1946: 10 (HOME EDITION). Web. 23 Oct 2016 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article78249702>>.
- ⁹² (Image) *West Australian* (Perth, WA : 1879 - 1954), Saturday 4 June 1949, page 22
- ⁹³ G. C. Bolton, 'Mitchell, Sir James (1866–1951)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/mitchell-sir-james-733/text13287>, published first in hardcopy 1986, accessed online 27 October 2016.
- ⁹⁴ Love and humanity inspire the foundation of Casson House (1949, June 2). *Western Mail* (Perth, WA : 1885 - 1954), p. 23 (Women's Magazine SECTION). Retrieved October 27, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article39095285>
- ⁹⁵ The Weir family made shocking news in 1930 when his second daughter Guida Weir, broke her engagement to Bertram Morrison of Carnarvon. Morrison came to the Claremont Weir home at 50 Victoria Avenue by invitation to discuss the engagement where he blew himself to death with gelignite in front of Miss Weir. Although a society man who also had strong interests in racing and golf, he also found time to provide services to the MHACCFAL for many years, since the founding days. He (also) died in 1952 in December, aged 79.
- ⁹⁶ 'Sunday Times Reporter Works For 5 Weeks As Attendant At The Hospital For The Insane And Here Describes'. (1950, February 12). *Sunday Times* (Perth, WA : 1902 - 1954), p. 5. Retrieved June 10, 2015, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article59503735>
- ⁹⁷ A. Ellis, 1983.
- ⁹⁸ A. Ellis, 1983.
- ⁹⁹ P. Martyr, 2013.
- ¹⁰⁰ P. Martyr, 2013.
- ¹⁰¹ Image: HELP FOR A WIDOW—ALL IN A DAY'S WORK (1951, November 12). *The West Australian* (Perth, WA : 1879 - 1954), p. 5. Retrieved September 29, 2016, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article48999473>
- ¹⁰² Donald Grant, 'Smith, James MacCallum (1868–1939)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/smith-james-maccallum-8476/text14905>, published first in hardcopy 1988, accessed online 15 November 2016
- ¹⁰³ Figure Courtesy Colin Ross. From left: Cook Brooke(?), Nurse Lum-Garner, Tilly Gard and Margaret Ross. *Casson House, 1968*
- ¹⁰⁴ Martyr, Philippa. A Hopeless hill: Oral histories from Claremont, Swanbourne and Graylands Hospitals, 1935-1995 [online]. *Oral History Association of Australia Journal, The*, No. 33, 2011: 3-8. Availability: <<http://search.informit.com.au/documentSummary;dn=984785091896611;res=IELIND>> ISSN: 0158-7366. [cited 03 Nov 16].
- ¹⁰⁵ Martyr, Philippa. A Hopeless hill: Oral histories from Claremont, Swanbourne and Graylands Hospitals, 1935-1995 [online]. *Oral History Association of Australia Journal, The*, No. 33, 2011: 3-8. Availability: <<http://search.informit.com.au/documentSummary;dn=984785091896611;res=IELIND>> ISSN: 0158-7366. [cited 03 Nov 16].
- ¹⁰⁶ P. Martyr, Notes on MHS Hostels and the Whitby Falls Connection. Unpublished paper, NMHS MH, 2013.
- ¹⁰⁷ A. Ellis, 1983, 142.
- ¹⁰⁸ Unspecified newspaper clipping pasted in Casson House Minute Book.
- ¹⁰⁹ MHACCA AGM Minutes, 1967.
- ¹¹⁰ MHACCA AGM Minutes, 1971
- ¹¹¹ <https://www.ranzcp.org/About-us/About-the-College/Our-history/Presidents-of-the-College/Arch-Ellis.aspx>
- ¹¹² The Biographical Dictionary of the Australian Senate, vol. 3, 1962-1983, University of New South Wales Press Ltd, Sydney, 2010, pp. 464-467. Contribution by [Patrice Cooke](#) and [Bobbie Oliver](#). Accessed: 22 December 2016, <http://biography.senate.gov.au/index.php/cooke-joseph-alfred/>

¹¹³ Biographic information contained in: Australian Capital Territory, Public Place Names (Coombs) Determination, 2013 (No 1). Accessed 21st December 2016: www.legislation.act.gov.au/di/2013-28/current/pdf/2013-28.pdf